

October, 1938

The American Mercury

Library
Southwestern State College
Weatherford, Oklahoma



Only Saps Work	Anonymous
The Mass-Man Takes Over	Ralph Adams Cram
Anschluss with Canada?	Richard W. Scott
The New York Subway: <i>The Most Awful Ride in the World</i>	Laurence Bell
Don't Send Your Boy to Prep School	Lew Morris
The Truth About Aaron Burr	Nathan Schachner
What Price Good Neighbor?	Lawrence Dennis
Government-Owned Railroads	Oswald G. Villard
O'Daniel, Next Governor of Texas: <i>"I've Got That Million-Dollar Smile"</i>	J. P. McEvoy
The Over-Civilized	Alan Devoe
WPA — The Modern Tammany	Albert Jay Nock
Catastrophe in Galveston	John W. Thomason, Jr.
Do You Wear Eyeglasses?	Sidney A. Fox

THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

By H. L. Mencken

25 cents

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



More Goods for More People at Less Cost

HAD the 7½ million people who bought new radio sets in 1937 been obliged to pay 1929 prices for them, the total cost to the public would have been \$700,000,000 greater than it actually was. In fact, the 7½ million sets of 1937 cost the public \$188,000,000 less than the 4½ million sets of 1929. And because radios cost less, more people could buy them, and the purchasers had more money to buy additional comforts and conveniences.

This is but one of many cases where industry has found ways to make better products at less cost. For instance, the 1½ million electric washers bought in 1937 cost the purchasers 2 million dollars less than the million bought in 1929. The 1,200,000 electric fans bought in 1937

cost the purchasers \$700,000 less than about half that number bought in 1929. And in this same period hundreds of other manufactured products, because of improved manufacturing methods, have been reduced in cost so that more people can have more of the good things of life.

This process of creating *real wealth* has brought to America the highest standard of living ever known, and it is this process which must continue if even higher standards are to be attained. General Electric scientists, engineers, and workmen are contributing to this progress. By developing new and better ways to use electricity for the benefit of the public, they are constantly providing More Goods for More People at Less Cost.

G-E research and engineering have saved the public from ten to one hundred dollars for every dollar they have earned for General Electric

GENERAL ELECTRIC

1938—OUR SIXTIETH YEAR OF MAKING ELECTRICITY MORE USEFUL TO YOU—1938

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FINE FALL FICTION

English Rue

By MARTIN HARE

A book which has that indefinable quality — charm.
Its setting is England, Paris and the Austrian Tyrol.

\$2.50

Wings of Great Desire

By JAMES GRAY

The story of one woman's life which embodies the
secret passions and ambitions of many women. \$2.50

Fox in the Cloak

By HARRY LEE

The portrait of an artist as a young man in this
modern world; compelling, objective narrative.

\$2.50

Marching Orders

By I. V. MORRIS

A novel of atmosphere and suspense. From the first
page the reader feels the mounting tension. \$2.50

at your bookdealer's

MACMILLAN

THE AMERICAN MERCURY

VOLUME XLV	TABLE OF CONTENTS	NUMBER 178
October	Paul Palmer, <i>Editor</i>	1938
EDITORIAL:		
Report on America. II.		129
Only Saps Work.	Anonymous	136
The Most Awful Ride in the World.	Laurence Bell	142
What Price Good Neighbor?	Lawrence Dennis	150
Anschluss With Canada?	Richard W. Scott	159
The Mass-Man Takes Over.	Ralph Adams Cram	166
Don't Send Your Boy to Prep School.	Lew Morris	177
The American Civil Liberties Union.	H. L. Mencken	182
The Truth About Aaron Burr.	Nathan Schachner	194
"I've Got That Million-Dollar Smile".	J. P. McEvoy	202
Do You Wear Eyeglasses?	Sidney A. Fox	208
THE OTHER SIDE:		
Government-Owned Railroads.	Oswald Garrison Villard	211
THE STATE OF THE UNION:		
WPA — The Modern Tammany.	Albert Jay Nock	215
AMERICANA		220
DOWN TO EARTH:		
The Over-Civilized.	Alan Devoc	222
POETRY:		
I. The Boast.	Glenn Ward Dresbach	226
II. Wind Going By.	Louis Stoddard	226
III. Autumn Recessional.	John Robert Quinn	227
THE LIBRARY:		
Catastrophe in Galveston.	John W. Thomason, Jr.	228
THE CHECK LIST.		iv, 233
THE OPEN FORUM.		238
RECORDED MUSIC.		x
THE CONTRIBUTORS.		xii
Lawrence E. Spivak, <i>General Manager</i> J. W. Ferman, <i>Circulation Manager</i>		

Published by The American Mercury, Inc., monthly on the 25th of the month preceding the date, at 25 cents a copy. Annual subscription, \$3.00 in U. S. and Possessions, Canada, Mexico, Cuba, Spain and Colonies, and the Republics of Central and South America. Foreign subscriptions, \$4.00. Publication office, Concord, N. H. Editorial office, Ridgefield, Conn. General offices, 570 Lexington avenue, New York City. Printed in the United States. Copyright, 1938, by The American Mercury, Inc. Entered as

second-class matter at the post office at Concord, N. H., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Five weeks' advance notice required for change of subscribers' addresses. Indexed in The Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature. No reproduction of content allowed without written permission. The American Mercury, Inc., accepts no responsibility for submitted manuscripts. Address all editorial correspondence and manuscripts to Ridgefield, Connecticut.

AN EDITORIAL BY WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE . . .
in the Emporia (Kan.) Daily Gazette

BEER STATESMANSHIP

It has become obvious ever since the repeal of prohibition that the American brewers were determined not to make the mistake that the brewers made in pre-prohibition days. Then they tied up tightly with the distillers and beer was classed indiscriminately with liquor. The brewers are now trying to get away from the distillers, and a year ago they adopted an independent code, pledged themselves to "conduct their business in conformity with established laws and in co-operation with the authorities." Further, they pledged themselves to support "duly constituted authorities for the elimination of anti-social conditions" in the beer business. They pledged themselves to get behind the "great body of retailers who sell beer as law abiding citizens" and also to back up authorities in preventing "beer sales to minors or persons who have drunk to excess." The code aimed high.

It was obvious that Kansas is the one place in the United States where the United Brewers' Industrial Foundation, which was back

of the code, with offices in New York, could come and find a fertile field to try out the code. They sent a representative of the Foundation to Kansas. He went to work in a practical manner. He surveyed the beer business in the large counties of Kansas where, if anywhere, the code would crack. He went to the sheriffs and the county attorneys in these counties. He went to the Attorney General of Kansas and told the law enforcing officers everywhere that he wanted their help and he wanted to help them clean up questionable beer parlors, places where they sold beer to minors, to drunks, where they kept open after the hours set down by the local authorities, where the beer dealers permitted hard drinks to be sold or sold them, and in general, this agent of the brewers back of the code made a genuine and certainly an effective campaign in Kansas to weed out the bad practices which tend to grow up where hard illegal liquor mixes itself with the sale of beer.

The Gazette knows definitely two cases where evidence was furnished

by the Brewers' Foundation to close up certain whiskey joints. With the full co-operation of the local officers and the representatives of the Brewers' Foundation, public enforcement of the Kansas law controlling the sale of beer can be had. That co-operation should be given.

There is no reason why the beer business should not be conducted as any other commercial business—breakfast food, toothpaste, tenderized ham, packaged coffee or shoes. But it must get away and evidently is trying to get away from the stigma that always will rest upon hard liquor.

The representatives of the Brewers' Foundation in Kansas wrote to The Gazette:

"We stand ready to co-operate with Kansas officials in the enforcement of the law. We have laid before officials evidence of violations of the liquor laws and some definite results have been attained. We pledge our continued efforts."

This is not idle persiflage. Apparently the Brewers' Foundation means business.

(from issue of April 15, 1938)

Here's what we promised:

One pledge from The Brewers Code: "We pledge our support to the duly constituted authorities for the elimination of anti-social conditions wherever they may surround the sale of beer to the consumer."

Here's what we're doing:

As one example (and there are others): our investigators gathered evidence in Kansas that some retail outlets were using beer licenses as screens to sell bootleg liquor. The Attorney General cooperated, prosecuted and won. Then William Allen White, great American editor, published the above editorial.

It's true... "anti-social conditions" exist in only a tiny fraction of the quarter-million places where beer is sold.



Even so, we cannot hope to "police" them... unless you too will cooperate.

Here's what You can do:

1. Follow up *your* local authorities. Just insist that they enforce *existing laws* against illegal sales of liquor, operation of illicit resorts, sales after hours, sales to minors, sales to persons who have drunk to excess.
 2. Patronize only respectable, legal retail outlets.
 3. Show that you are behind us... buy only beer or ale made by Foundation members... identified in their advertising by the symbol shown here.
- Do these things, and you help the bulwark of moderation... beer... and the public interest as well.

Correspondence is invited with groups and individuals everywhere who are interested in the brewing industry and its responsibilities. Address: United Brewers Industrial Foundation, 21 East 40th Street, New York, N. Y.

THE CHECK LIST

★★★★ indicate a book of exceptional and lasting merit. ★★★★ a distinguished and valuable work. ★★★ a readable and engaging volume. ★★ a fair performance. ★ an unimportant book, but possessing some characteristic of value. The absence of stars may be taken to mean the absence of merit.

FICTION

★★★ PROMENADE, by G. B. Lancaster. \$2.50. *Reynal and Hitchcock*. Gives a graphic picture of the adventure, suffering, and romance that marked the first lusty days of New Zealand. The author is an outstanding craftsman among contemporary writers.

★★★ THESE BARS OF FLESH, by T. S. Stribling. \$2.50. *Doubleday, Doran*. A typical small-town politician from the South eyes the North of the university intellectual. Mr. Stribling's dissecting knife falls sharply on the successful intellectual frauds and the young Radical intelligentsia who nest at such cafeterias of the Higher Learning. The story in itself is amusing, the satire stimulating and timely. A novel well worth reading.

★★★ THE WALL, by Mary Roberts Rinehart. \$2.00. *Farrar and Rinehart*. A glamorous divorcée makes an unexpected visit to her ex-sister-in-law's home, in a select New England summer colony, just in time for the season's three murders. Well done; difficult to put down.

★★★ HARRY PICKERING, by Robert E. McClure. \$2.50. *Harcourt, Brace*. Harry Pickering is born to fortune and position — due to his father's efforts developing Pickering Automobiles — but, lacking moral or mental stamina, the young man's record in business and private life is wholly ineffectual. A shrewd portrait of a pioneer industrialist's son, the story will not be altogether pleasant reading for present-day aristocrats.

★★ CONCORD IN JEOPARDY, by Doris Leslie. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. A fictional biography of a gifted Englishman who, born in

London in the 1880's a dressmaker's son, lives to become a wealthy artist. His early struggles, his life in Florence, and a disastrous marriage, are detailed in a pleasant though undistinguished manner.

★★ AMERICAN YEARS, by Harold Sinclair. \$2.75. *Doubleday, Doran*. One of those formless pieces of historical fiction, a mosaic rather than a painting. An Illinois town and the people in it, from 1830 to 1860; exciting years, and real people.

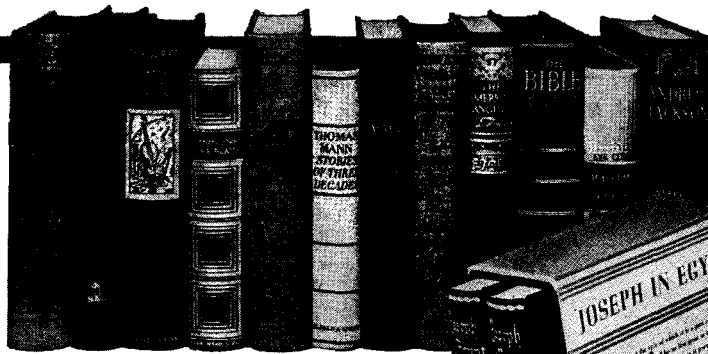
★★ THE CUT DIRECT, by Alice Tilton. \$2.00. *Norton*. A gay, implausible mystery.

★ CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE, by Romilly Cavan. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. Marriage puts an end to the promising career of playwright Mark Brown: his wife's success as dress-designer overshadows his own, leaving him embittered and disconsolate. Very, very English.

★ THE WARDEN OF THE MARCHES, by Louis Magrath King. \$2.00. *Houghton Mifflin*. English-consul Brundage gets embroiled in political intrigue on the Chinese frontier of Tibet. Result: a he-man adventure story with an ominous Oriental lurking on every page. A possible anodyne for the tired — very tired — business-man.

★ HISTORICAL NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENTS, by Rafael Sabatini. \$2.50. *Houghton Mifflin*. The third series of Mr. Sabatini's historical short stories. If you liked the others you will like these.

(Continued on page 233)



ALL THESE BOOKS WERE DISTRIBUTED *Free*

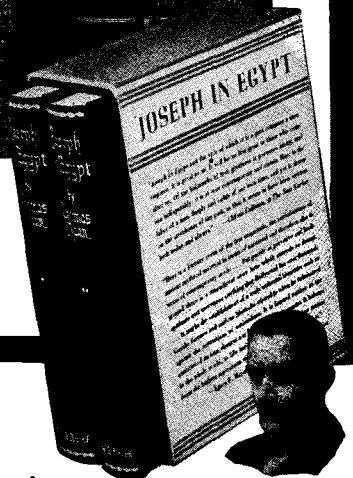
—among members of the Book-of-the-Month Club

*for every two books-of-the-month you buy
you receive one book-dividend free*

ALL THE BOOKS above have been book-dividends, distributed free among Book-of-the-Month Club members. The book-of-the-month is always high on national best-seller lists. Frequently it is a book you are extremely anxious not to miss. Whenever this is the case, you benefit enormously by buying it from the Club — because of the unique book-dividend system. Last year over \$2,500,000 worth of books were distributed *free* in this way — among the Club's members.

But, please understand, you are never obliged to take any book-of-the-month our judges choose. Nor are you expected to buy one book every month. As a member, you can do one of three things in any month: order the book-of-the-month; order any other new book you are particularly anxious not to miss; or, instruct the Club not to send you any book at all.

Mail the inquiry coupon below and we will send you a booklet outlining what the Book-of-the-Month Club does for book-readers and how such enormous values can be given to you. If, after reading the booklet, you decide to join the Club, we shall send you the two-volume edition of JOSEPH IN EGYPT being held for you. Over 175,000 book-reading families now use this sensible and economical means of keeping up with the best new books.



THOMAS MANN

FREE...TO NEW MEMBERS

*a novel more praised by critics
than any work of fiction in 1938.*

Joseph in Egypt

By Thomas Mann

IN TWO VOLUMES - BOXED
RETAIL PRICE \$5.00

BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH CLUB, Inc. A1310
385 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y.

PLEASE send me without cost, a booklet outlining how the Book-of-the-Month Club operates. This request involves me in no obligation to subscribe to your service. It is understood that if I decide to join I will receive a free copy of *Joseph in Egypt*.

Name Mr. }
Mrs. }
Miss }
Please print plainly

Address

City.....State.....

Books shipped to Canadian members, DUTY PAID,
thru Book-of-the-Month Club (Can.) Ltd.

The New Novel by
**EDITH
WHARTON**

The Buccaneers

The last novel from the pen of the distinguished author of "The Age of Innocence" to which it is altogether comparable in its brilliant picture of the "society" of the 1870's. \$2.50

**The Gateway
to History**

By **ALLAN NEVINS**

A popular introduction to historical literature by one of America's foremost historians, twice winner of the Pulitzer prize. \$4.00

At All Booksellers
D. APPLETON-CENTURY COMPANY
35 West 32nd Street, New York

**THE LAST
FIVE HOURS
OF AUSTRIA**

"Supremely
dramatic"—
The New Yorker

By **Eugene Lennhoff**

Former Editor of the Vienna Telegraph

"AS AN able reporter he gives as profound a picture as a quick and trained glance at reality can catch. His intimate knowledge of locale and personnel allows him access to the news when it breaks and often before. A very exciting, very human, and very tragic document."

—*The Nation*.

At all bookstores • \$2.50

F. A. Stokes Co. • 443 Fourth Ave., New York

**GOD LOVES
A DUMBBELL**
by **DARIA GREY**



Droll to the point
of hilarity. A master-
piece of incredible in-
genueness. The fun-
niest satire ever written
on modern sex life.

\$1.50

**PEGASUS
PUBLISHING CO.**
67 West 44th Street, New York

At Your
Bookstore
or
Write

**Listen
to this
Record!**



**SPEAK
FRENCH
SPANISH, GERMAN OR ITALIAN
AT ONCE**

"Learn by listening" to Cortina records the
NATURAL way—quickly, easily, cheaply

Sent on 5 Days' Approval

Most fascinating, most satisfactory method ever
known for learning or perfecting yourself in a foreign
language. Investigate!

Free Book

Write at once
for our free
book, "The
Cortinaphone
Short-Cut"
which tells
how you can
learn to speak
a foreign lan-
guage at once.

**CORTINA
ACADEMY**
Suite 4610
105 W. 40th St.
New York, N. Y.

RUDY VALLEE Says . . .

. . . delighted with the results from
my Spanish Cortinaphone Course . . .
my new French and Spanish invalu-
able to me in broadcasting and
recording . . .

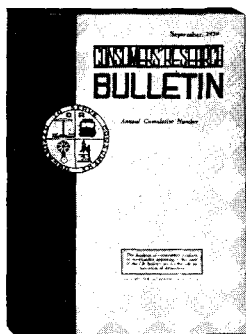
SIDNEY CHAPLIN Says . . .

Cortinaphone has been a great
help to me in acquiring a practical
knowledge of both French and Ger-
man which has proved as useful in
my work . . .

FRANK LUTHER Says . . .

The pronunciation on the records is
remarkably clear . . . your text books
make it possible to learn quickly . . .
Cortinaphone has my whole-hearted
endorsement.

Can You Answer These Questions?



Which refrigerator is most economical to operate?



What laxatives are safe or least harmful to use?



Which 3 brands of Gillette-type razor blades were much superior to other brands tested?



What are good, and inexpensive, brands of toilet soap?

Just Out—

THE HANDBOOK OF BUYING

More than 200 Pages Provide the Answers to these Questions — Over 4,000 Products Rated by Brand Name!

A RADIO selling for \$85 was found by Consumers' Research to be superior to one at \$170, for example, and a vacuum cleaner at \$49.95 was more efficient than one selling for \$71.50. Savings made on these products and hundreds of others by following CR recommendations can save you over \$100 yearly judging by the experience of many. An insurance broker writes: "Money saved . . . by buying cheaper than we ordinarily would because of knowledge, \$200."

CR's 1938 Annual Cumulative Bulletin to be issued September 15th lists several thousands of well-known brands as Recommended, Intermediate, and Not Recommended. Ratings are made on the basis of tests and analyses conducted by qualified experts and technicians. This Bulletin can provide you with a handbook of simply written, clearly understandable, money-saving data, on how to buy the best and get the most for your money. Products treated include:

Foods	Automobiles	Automobile Radios
Cosmetics	Antiseptics	Laxatives
Soap	Men's Suits	Toothbrushes
Radio Sets	Electric Shavers	Cameras

This single Bulletin, the Annual Cumulative Bulletin of Consumers' Research, can save you many times over the cost of a full year's subscription to Consumers' Research. For the small yearly fee of \$3, a complete year of the confidential service of Consumers' Research is available. In addition to the 200-page handbook of buying, sent immediately upon receipt of remittance and the signed agreement below, you will receive Bulletins each month (except July and August when no Bulletins are issued). These Bulletins will bring you monthly the results of new tests and analyses just completed by Consumers' Research on a constantly increasing number of products.

To secure unbiased information on the things you buy, to learn the real worth of merchandise, to save substantial sums of money yearly, let Consumers' Research, the pioneer organization for the protection of the consumer, become your testing laboratory. Mail the coupon today.

CONSUMERS' RESEARCH, INC., Washington, N. J.

I enclose \$3 (Canada \$3; foreign \$3.50) for one year's subscription to the Consumers' Research Bulletin (which includes the Annual Cumulative Bulletin number for 1938 and Bulletins monthly — except during July and August).

It is understood that my handling of any CR material which is marked, "The analyses of commodities, products, or merchandise appearing in this issue are for the sole information of subscribers," will be in accordance with that direction.

Name in longhand, please

Address

Profession

M-10-38

"And I Can Make It Talk"

You're right about that, Sonny.
At eight or eighty it's easy for
any one to use the telephone.
And year after year the service
gets better and better.

This country leads the world
in telephone service because it
leads in telephone research.
Thousands of scientists, engi-
neers and assistants are constantly
at work in the Bell Telephone
Laboratories to make the service
faster, clearer and more eco-
nomical. No part of the Bell
System is more im-
portant to you as a
telephone user.



BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

YOUR GOOD TELEPHONE SERVICE IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE
CONSTANT RESEARCH OF BELL TELEPHONE LABORATORIES

The American MERCURY

EDITORIAL

Report on America, II. *The Coming Slave-State*

BEFORE summing up the Government's record since 1932, let us make our position clear. Many honest and decent people support Mr. Roosevelt's Administration because they believe that, while it has made mistakes, it has acted from good motives, and its mistakes have been of the head and not of the heart. We do not agree. We believe that the Administration has never once acted from a disinterested non-political motive; and that whatever good things it has done, if any, were purely incidental. We do not press this point, however, but let it go by default. We will accept without a word any credit-items that anyone chooses to list in the Government's favor. More than that, we will agree to let each of those items be

magnified by a hundred diameters and multiplied by ten. In short, for the purposes of this editorial, we are ready to indorse any estimate that anyone cares to make of the virtues of the New Deal and its promoters, however fantastic it may appear to be, or may actually be.

Our position is simply this: No amount of good that the New Deal has done, no amount of good that any government could possibly do, would balance the amount of permanent evil — not transient and remediable evil, but permanent and incurable evil — that the New Deal has visited on this country in the last six years. This fact remains a fact, no matter how much anyone may choose to put down to the New Deal's credit, or how good a

character may be given to its promoters. Let Mr. Roosevelt be another Antoninus, Mr. Ickes another Alfred, and Mr. Wallace another Saint Louis — the balance of good and evil still comes out quite the same, and no putative aggregate of virtuous deeds these men have done can bring it out of the red when totted up with the evils for which they and their associates are directly responsible.

Speaking in general terms, the irreparable damage which the New Deal has done the country is by its perfection of a political technique entirely new in America. In principle it is not new, and some of its elements have been put into practice sporadically, but never before has this technique been worked out in full in this country, put into operation on a national scale, and got itself generally accepted as normal and reasonable. Now that this has been done, and its effectiveness so clearly demonstrated, there can be no shadow of doubt that it is here to stay until it has disintegrated our whole economic and political structure.

The first step in this technique is the pauperization of vast numbers of the electorate with public money. For the first time in our history millions of persons, perhaps nearly 10 per cent of the

population, have been put in their place in a government-run economy; and, which is more important, the country has largely been thus led to accept the idea of a government-run economy as a heaven-sent refuge for irresponsibility. This falls in perfectly with the average man's disposition to work as little as need be to provide himself with the necessities of life, for once the State guarantees those necessities, and the public consents to its doing so, that need is reduced to zero. Whatever desire he may have to improve his condition is thenceforth expressed in efforts to get larger subsidies out of the State, rather than in any effort to restore himself to independence. He neither knows nor cares that the trouble with a government-run economy is that a government has no money of its own to give him — that all it has is what it takes out of production — and that therefore the cost of his pauperization brings production, which is the source of all wealth, just so much nearer the point of drying up.¹

Under a slave-economy, such as prevails in the European countries

¹ Perhaps the ultimate triumph of this indifference is seen in the popular demand that every resident of the State of California over fifty years of age shall be given outright a weekly dole of thirty dollars. Enough petitions have been signed to put this amazing proposal on the ballot, and its legality is now under consideration by the State Supreme Court.

which have resorted to a system of forced labor, and where the citizen has no effective voice in the government, this wholesale pauperization might for a time be tolerable. In that case the paupers work to keep up production, and while no slave-economy has been more than fairly successful in the long run, it usually keeps its head above water for some time, provided it is not in competition with systems of free labor. Here, however, where the paupers are maintained as a dead-weight load on production for the sake of their votes, the case is different. They are organized and relied upon to vote, as they do vote, to one effect only; that is, to consolidate their own position of dependence on the State. Their class is so numerous that what this comes to is a pauper-control of the State at second-hand; that is, control of the State by a demagogue who controls the paupers—and the support of the whole mass devolves upon the progressively enfeebled efforts of labor and capital to keep up the production of wealth.

II

The second step in the new political technique is to raise pauperism to the dignity of a recognized and

honorable status. It is an obvious advantage to the State that the pauperized masses should be strongly and aggressively self-conscious in their position; that they should develop a sort of free-masonry or *esprit de corps* which would weld them into solidarity and thus make them more easily manageable. In order to instill this spirit, the State has had to reverse the whole current estimate of voluntary pauperism in order to nullify the strong general prejudice against it. Up to the present time the sturdy beggar has not been exactly what one would call a popular idol in America. People regarded his status as shameful and disgusting, and gave him the cold shoulder; while on the other hand, no people were ever more easily and deeply touched by actual misfortune than those same Americans, or more generously responsive to its plea. To make the pauperized masses properly self-conscious, therefore, their status must be made respectable, and to accomplish this, two things had to be done. They must all, without exception, be lumped together in the category of sheer blameless unfortunates—there should no longer be any category of sturdy beggars—and then they must all be made to appear so scandalously and out-

rageously victimized by society as to be worthy of the greatest possible generosity.

The New Deal was remarkably successful with this problem. It immediately propagandized the idea that its paupers were ground down by greedy and vicious men who were engineering a corrupt economic system, and that the State, in its enlightened goodness, had not only come to their rescue, but also was out to reform and moralize the system and the society which had oppressed them. The condition of the public mind in 1932 so far helped to make this pretense plausible that its factual basis was let go unexamined. The State made no attempt to draw a line between the unemployed and the unemployable, or between the unfortunate and the loafer. It made no serious attempt even to find out what the number of unemployed persons was. We all remember how quick it was to resent and fight off the suggestion that it should take a census of actual unemployment. The State merely lumped together all comers, Tom, Dick, and the Devil, in a general category of sheer undeserved misfortune, and held them up as self-respecting persons, ready and willing to make their own living if only our iniquitous economic sys-

tem would let them. All this, of course, was in itself enough to show what the aims and intentions of the Government actually were, but it went almost unnoticed. Some few saw through it and said so, but they were very few, and they were easily made to appear as sinful and heartless persons, in league with evil, and obstructing the will of God.

Thus a cult of self-conscious and aggressive dependence was made to supplant the earlier American cult of self-conscious and aggressive independence. The country was schooled in the belief that there was nothing shameful but everything admirable about the pauperization of great nondescript masses, because society had sinned against them and they were in no case to be blamed for their plight. Then logically the Government took every means to show that since society's sin against these masses was so great, their fate so undeserved, and the restoration of their morale so important, they should so far as possible be coddled and made to feel quite at home and proud of their new standing as pensioners of the State. Hence we have seen these paupers organized in alliances, unions, clubs, and differentiating themselves socially as a privileged class, a sort of

Fifth Estate; and we now begin to see among them the emergence of a privileged-class disdain for persons who are stupid enough to work for a living.

The third step in the new technique is the intensive cultivation of a whole series of group-hatreds. From the viewpoint of the State, this is sound practice, for groups which are kept busy hating one another have just so much less attention and less hatred to spare for what the State is doing. Class-hatred as generally understood—that is, hatred of the Haves by the Have-Nots—has never been hard to stir up, and certainly the New Deal has spared no effort in this direction. Not only the idle rich, but also the industrious and successful, have been its prime scapegoats from the beginning, with the interesting result that the whole country's attitude towards industriousness and success has been changed. It is an impressive testimony to political skill that a country where, a dozen years ago, the worship of success was at an unparalleled peak of fervor, has now gone over to an exactly opposite psychology. But with its excellent and far-seeing thoroughness, the New Deal has gone beyond the encouragement of class-hatred in the Marxian sense. It has diligently

promoted the hatred of any form of superiority. The small businessman is encouraged to hate the big businessman; the employee, to hate the employer; the humble, to hate the prominent; the corrupt, to hate the honest; and so on. "We are a bitter people," said Mr. George Sokolsky sadly, the other day. "We have not only become class-conscious, but class-vindictive."

The fourth step in the new technique is to keep a well-disciplined body of shock-troops steadily at work behind an immense smoke-screen of humanitarian propaganda. All governments more or less keep up an ostentatious Jekyll-Hyde character; the New Deal's eminence is in its unprecedented success at getting away with it. All its measures are propagandized as measures of social reform; but with unfailing regularity they all pan out in a great increase of Federal executive power, a huge enlargement of bureaucracy, an increase of patronage, and the addition of another mass of votes to the "safe" list. The New Deal has enrolled a staunch body of eager and sincere reformers of one stripe or another; but under the command of Mr. Farley it has also the finest corps of shock-troopers that was ever gathered together in a republic. These latter gentry know how

to apply to the trade of politics every trick and wrinkle that has been devised in the world of business: it is their job to see to it that no reform shall be espoused by the management unless it shows a clear prospect of paying political dividends. The eager and sincere reformers put forward a scheme; then Mr. Roosevelt and the shock-troop boys go to work on it; and, if it has political possibilities, another bogus and expensive social reform is launched upon the country.

In the harsh light of the foregoing, earnest and sincere supporters of the New Deal may now see just what it is they have let themselves in for. Instead of a prospective new deal in social justice, the thing they have helped to bring in is a perilous new technique of political management.

III

The question now is: what can be done about it? The off-hand answer is: elect a Republican Congress next month, and a Republican President two years hence; "Democracy" will have asserted itself, and we all can congratulate ourselves at the top of our voices on our escape. "The peepul will have spoke," as the late Senator Penrose caustically observed, and

that will be the end of the matter.

But will it? Really, now, is anyone so simple-minded as to believe that a new technique of such tried and proved efficiency will be snubbed by a Republican administration or any other administration that can get the chance to use it? Nonsense! It might be streamlined a little at first to coax production along, as farmers sometimes hang a carrot out in front of a horse's nose; but does anyone in his right mind believe for a moment that any political camorra would do more than that, if indeed as much? Again, nonsense! The American people may be ever so "damned dumb" as Mr. Hopkins says they are—and he should know—but it is a little hard to believe that any people could be *that* dumb.

So, what then? All we can see for it is that the pauperized masses which Mr. Roosevelt has consolidated and made articulate will continue to be used as they are now being used, until such time as production can no longer stand the drain of money wherewith to pauperize them. Then, when that time comes, the complacent supporters of the new technique will suddenly wake up to confront the disagreeable reality which Herbert Spencer forecast as long ago as the

'Eighties — "civil war, immense bloodshed, and eventually a military despotism of a severe type".

The breakdown of production is the sure sign that a country has run by the last of its political danger-signals. Production broke down in Italy and Germany, and we all saw what happened and how promptly it happened. We all see also that governmental exactions have left American production hanging by the eyelids. If it holds even that precarious position through the next two years, this magazine will miss its guess; but at all events its breakdown is a matter of a relatively short time; much shorter, we believe, than most forecasters imagine. The moment the breakdown occurs, the way will be open for a government-run economy (which is to say, a slave-economy) complete and perfect.

If the prospect of such a regime

seems interesting to anyone — a regime of forced labor, ruthless confiscations and suppressions, the reduction of the whole of civil life under police law and martial law — we can only say with Lincoln, that for those who like that sort of thing, it is probably about the sort of thing they like. We distinctly do not like it; but since we are unable to see any way out of it, the question of like or dislike seems hardly worth raising. We have nothing to suggest because, frankly, we know of nothing helpful that anyone could suggest. The time for such suggestions is past; this is the day after the fair.

Hence we are interested only in showing what the one great actual achievement of the New Deal has been, and in giving some idea of the pass to which the sincere and eager supporters of Mr. Roosevelt have helped to bring the country.



YOU OUGHT TO SEE IT NOW, TOM

BY THOMAS JEFFERSON

What an augmentation of the field for jobbing, speculating, plundering, office building and office hunting would be produced by an assumption of all the State powers into the hands of the general Government!

ONLY SAPS WORK

ANONYMOUS

WHEN I left high school, times were tough. Today it would be called a Depression. No one but a sap, I have since learned, would have even considered looking for work. The proper move, it seems, was to start squawking that age was in league against us youngsters, and then go around and join a Youth Movement.

Besides, was I not cast of uncommon clay? I had spent four years preparing myself to become a writer. I was an artist. Toil should not be permitted to stain my genius, nor drudgery stifle the embryonic masterpieces taking shape within my inner being. No — the Government should have taken care of me, should have comforted and coddled me while my soul was developing.

But I was born into the sap class. None of these ideas occurred to me. If I thought of my Inner Being it was only in connection with how long I would be able to put three meals a day into it. My soul gave me no concern at all. My only trouble was with my feet, which

began to develop blisters as I pounded the hot pavements that summer, looking for a job.

Eventually I found one — as a hall boy, or assistant janitor, in a hotel. The hours were from six in the morning until six at night, with three-quarters of an hour for lunch, and a half-day off every other Sunday. The pay was nine dollars a week.

Of course, I would have fared much better on Relief. But Relief hadn't been invented then; and, anyhow, I had the dumb notion that an adult male should be capable of looking after himself. True, on nine dollars a week I had to struggle along without a used car and I seldom got to the movies — a condition which I now understand is intolerable and degrading. But by occasionally skipping a meal I was able to pay installments on a typewriter. The idea was — and you'll get a tremendous laugh out of this — I figured I might advance myself by working a little harder than the next fellow!

I spent my evenings writing

short stories. The stories were returned with relentless regularity. I was too much of a dim-wit to realize the editors were exercising unfair discrimination against me, and that what I should have done was to get a placard and picket the publishing houses. I didn't know that by bellyaching to my congressman I could get a law passed under which the government would pay me for destroying every other manuscript. Instead, I thought that there was probably something wrong with my writing. So I went right on grinding out yarns, trying to make them better, sending them out, and getting them back.

But keeping a dozen or two manuscripts traveling around the country runs into money. Postage alone is quite an item. On top of that, there are envelopes, paper used in retyping, clips, erasers, typewriter ribbons, and carbon paper. Moreover, in applying my talents to literature, I simultaneously applied the seat of my pants to a hard, hotel-room chair. The talents, however meager, lasted longer than the pants. Ordinarily, there is practically no connection between trousers and *belles lettres*. Authors have been known who wrote as well without pants as with them. But they didn't hold down a hotel job in the daytime.

I had the choice of new pants or keeping up the installments on my typewriter; and I began to see I was headed for some unpleasantness with the typewriter company.

Nowadays such a company wouldn't be allowed to exist. It was a low, selfish, mercenary concern, in business principally for profit. The installment was scarcely a week overdue when the company began harassing me, actually expecting me to pay what I owed, and threatening to take the typewriter if I didn't! And right here you'll see what a complete nitwit I was. Instead of blubbering to the government for a Typewriter Relief Loan, I went to my boss at the hotel and hit him for a raise. I mentioned that the hours were pretty long, the work pretty hard, and nine dollars a week hardly a princely salary. The boss told me if I didn't like the hours, the work, and the salary, maybe I could do better elsewhere.

Here I was face to face with ruthless, cold-blooded Capitalism, and I didn't know it. Didn't know that I should scream for the national guard and have the hotel closed until the matter could be arranged to my liking. Didn't even know enough to stage a sit-down strike!

You won't believe it, but I half-

way agreed with the boss. Maybe I *could* do better elsewhere. And so I went elsewhere, and I did do better. In fact I followed that haywire formula for a long, long time. I worked in hotels, theaters, newspaper offices, advertising agencies, and radio and movie studios. And when conditions didn't suit me and the boss was inclined to be hard-boiled, I had the blessed privilege of going to work for someone else.

Not that I always found a new job right away. I was busted plenty and often, forced to take any kind of work until I found something better. But I was just enough of a lame-brain to consider these setbacks as my own personal problems; I didn't imagine I had only to squeal and somebody would solve them for me.

And here's another funny one—I still clung to the naïve belief that the greater the effort put into a job the greater the compensation. For two years I put in thirteen-and-a-half hours a day with a seven-day week. There were many, many times when I did twenty-four and thirty-six hour stretches, when I worked Sundays and holidays, when I felt lucky if I had one evening off in a month. A dumb-luck? Sure, I was. Why, all I had to do was to lie down and bellow,

and some organization would have come buckety-buckety to my aid. It would have fought my battles for me. It would have seen to it that the less I worked the more pay I received. Or, failing in that, it would have taken the pay from some poor goof who had the ambition to work, and would have turned it over to me. It was all that simple.

Only I didn't know enough to squawk. So the Government gave me scant attention.

II

Recently, however, the Government has changed its attitude. When I didn't have a bank-roll, I was just a bum; but now that I've scraped a few dollars together, I'm the fellow the Government pays *particular* attention to.

For, it seems, in sticking to business, and learning my trade well enough to earn a comfortable living, I've been something of a heel. I deserve watching. What right have I to a comfortable living when the politicians have to be taken care of—and their relatives and friends who keep them in office—and Joe Mugg who was born too tired to work? The answer, apparently, is I haven't any right—at least not until the politicians and

Joe Mugg get theirs. They come first. After I have provided for them, if there's anything left out of my income, well, maybe that's okay. But I'd better be careful not to have too much left, or they'll call me back and take another cut.

They keep a pretty close tab on me. I'm continuously under suspicion, continuously regarded as a crook, continuously being called before examiners and accused of holding out on them.

"It says here on your tax return that you're a free-lance writer; yet you take deductions for business expenses. What expenses does a writer have? All you need is a pencil and paper."

"You list under deductions two trips to Hollywood. Why couldn't you have sent your stuff by mail?"

"Here's a hundred and fifty-two dollars which you spent last year for taxicabs. We can't allow that. You could have taken a street car or have walked."

"Here's an item of thirty-three dollars for entertaining movie and radio executives at dinner. Thirty-three dollars for a dinner is ridiculous. You could have eaten for six or eight."

I am told how to conduct my business, what kind of transportation to use, what hotels I should live in, even how much I should

eat — explicitly instructed how to manage my finances so there'll be a bigger "take" for the politicians and Joe Mugg. They exhibit no reticence concerning this end, make no attempt to conceal the fact that so long as I have made a dollar they are out to get their cut.

Although my business address and legal residence is in an Eastern State, I work from three to six months out of the year in Hollywood. The spectacle of two Sovereign States snarling over which is to get the bigger share of my income is significant and amusing — that is, it would be amusing if it weren't my earnings they were quarreling over.

I have, of course, the privilege of protesting these raids on my bank account; but I am frankly informed that such protests will get me nowhere with incredible rapidity. And while I am protesting, I am slapped down with a penalty of more than 100 per cent of the amount in dispute, a very effective method, by the way, of teaching me not to stick my neck out.

Last year I did a little careful figuring. What with Federal income tax, State income tax, personal property tax, unemployment tax, sales tax, and the rest of the shakedowns, I discovered I had

worked exactly six months out of twelve for Joe Mugg and the politicians. Income for the remaining six months I have thus far been permitted to retain, although any day now I'm expecting to be summoned before an examiner to explain why I had to have a study in which to work when I could just as well have taken my typewriter into the bathroom.

III

The foregoing is not an exceptional experience. It is more or less the experience of something like 25,000,000 people in the United States today. It is the experience of all those who have always worked and are still working for a living, those who prefer working to grafting, chiseling, racketeering, and whining for hand-outs. It is the story of about one-fifth of the American people — the one-fifth who are carrying the other four-fifths on their backs. In short, it is the story of the American middle class.

It is not a particularly new story. We have always been shoved around. We have always been pushovers. We have always been the little men who paid the big bills. The smart boys have known us for saps for a long, long time. We

were a good thing, and they kept it pretty much to themselves.

But now the secret is out. Even Joe Mugg has our number. We're getting it from all sides; and we'll continue to get it just as long as we continue to take it, just as long as we let middle-class notions of decency and respectability keep us from doing something about it.

Well, I say, *let's do something about it.*

Let's start by trying a little squawking, ourselves.

Let's begin screeching for lower taxes — and really screech.

Let's begin howling for a more even and equitable distribution of taxes.

Let's take advantage of every slight legal right to resist taxation, and bleat and beller over every extra dollar pried out of us.

Let's try a little class consciousness of our own, and shriek our heads off every time a law is passed not in our direct interests.

Let's forget our middle-class pride, and hold demonstrations, carry banners, march in parades, go in for mass-picketing, and make general nuisances of ourselves.

Let's holler and howl when labor and capital get into a ruckus, instead of playing our accustomed rôle of the good-natured, innocent bystander who stops the brick-bats.

Let's write letters every day — millions of letters — weeping, wailing and protesting — to the President, to our congressmen, to State legislatures, and city officials.

And when Joe Mugg cries bitter tears because he can't go to the movies, let's cry right alongside of him — *only louder*. Let's tell him we understand just how he feels, tell him there were times when we ourselves had to miss the movies,

times when we wondered how we were going to meet the rent and pay the grocery bill. But let's also tell him that somehow we managed to get along without help. And let's hint that he, himself, had better start managing because *very, very soon the free ride is going to be over*.

I don't know how far this squawking will get us. But, certainly, others have made it pay.



HOW TO SWING AN ELECTION

BY PUBLIUS CORNELIUS TACITUS

(Eighteen hundred years ago this eminent Roman historian reported the same scene as Americans are now witnessing; though he undoubtedly had never heard of WPA money or F. D. Roosevelt.)

Of the consular elections nothing can be said with precision. We see the emperor in some instances holding the name of the candidate in reserve, yet by an account of his birth, public conduct and military service, pointing directly at the man. At other times he refuses that satisfaction, content with general directions to the candidates not to embroil the election with intrigue or bribery, but to leave the whole to his management. His custom in general was to profess that he knew no candidates but those whose names he had transmitted to the consuls; others, he said, were free to offer themselves, if from merit or interest they conceived hopes of success. With speeches of this nature, plausible but unsubstantial, the people were amused. A show of liberty was held forth, fair in appearance, but deceitful, and for that reason tending to plunge mankind into deeper servitude.

THE MOST AWFUL RIDE IN THE WORLD

BY LAURENCE BELL

I^N no other city in the world would the citizenry tolerate such noise, filth, crowding, and general discomfort as some 2,600,000 residents of New York City endure twice daily in traveling through the horrendous series of tunnels which comprises the town's subway system. It is doubtful, indeed, if even the Russian proletariat would stand for such an affront to human dignity: were the luckless *moujiks* forced to undergo the further ordeal of riding each night in such a train, for instance, as the Bronx Park Express, they would have struck off their chains long before this. Only the very lowest type of human animals, for which distinction the New York City shagrag is far out in front, would so meekly and matter-of-factly submit to conditions that are so vile as to beggar description.

Do I exaggerate? Do I present a splenetic and distorted picture, inspired by some isolated instance of irritation? If you think so, come with me—if you are willing to

suffer anguish, if not actual physical injury—for a typical subway ride.

Assume that we are in lower Manhattan, and it is unfortunately necessary that we journey to the upper extreme of the Island—say, to Dyckman Street—via the subway. Unless we are familiar with the neighborhood, we probably will have some difficulty in finding a station, for there are no directing signs, and rarely does it do any good to inquire. Locating an entrance, we take a last breath of the open air (which is fetid enough, but, compared with what we shall breathe for the next forty-odd minutes it is the purest ozone). Plunging into the murky depths, we fight our way down slippery iron steps littered with discarded newspapers, cigar and cigarette butts, chewing gum, and miscellaneous trash. The handrails are scabrous to the touch, but we must cling to them, pulling ourselves downward hand over hand if we are ever to reach the platform: for, with but few exceptions, the entrances are

also the exits, and the emerging passengers are in too great a hurry to keep to one side of the stairway. We must shove or be shoved, and we may count ourselves extremely fortunate if it is not raining, for then we shall not have to duck the umbrellas which the passengers assuredly will open.

Gaining the platform at last, we discover that we have no nickels to pay our way through the turnstile, so we get in line before the change booth. While the cashier hands out change, considerably annoyed at being diverted from his pulp-mystery magazine, we discover further that we have no coins at all. This means, as we know from past experience, that the change from our dollar bill will be in nickels and dimes, and if we protest at thus being showered with chicken feed, the cashier will growl "You ain't no better than nobody else, Mac". Coin in hand, we make two or three abortive attempts to pass through, for like the stairways, the turnstiles seem always to be crowded. Finally, however, we gain the platform proper, more than likely just as a train is leaving. How long we shall have to wait for another, there is no way of knowing, since no one has ever been able to figure out how the subways arrange their schedules:

certainly they are not gauged according to the increase and decline of traffic, for I have often seen a hot succession of trains during slack periods, and other times waited interminably when the platforms were jammed with fares.

While we wait, let us look about: the platform is perhaps twelve feet wide, a hundred yards long, and is of concrete even filthier than the stairs, a filth that is accentuated by the dim lights whose sole reflectors are the stained walls of once-white tile. Scant relief from this bleak scene is afforded by a newsstand, bedecked with literature of the same lurid genre which so enthralls our cashier friend, and by advertising posters, nearly all of which employ the familiar psychology of using shapely gals in bathing suits and lingerie, to exploit amusement parks, cereals, depilatories, dentifrices, and remedies for corns, colds, hangover, heartburn, and God knows what. The only novelty in this monotonous presentation of lithographed cuties has been provided by the penciled-on embellishments of moronic idlers, and these, too, are standardized, running invariably to the hirsute, the phallic, or a combination of the two. It takes but a moment to examine this unique art form, so we mill about the plat-

form, breathing the foulest of air and straining our ears for the sound of an approaching train. We shall either freeze or swelter, depending upon the season: the stations are colder in Winter, hotter in Summer, than the open streets. And if you think of sitting down until our train arrives, think again; though there is enough waste space on every platform to place seats for a hundred people, each station has but one bench, which by tight crowding will hold eight adults; these benches are occupied more or less permanently by the army of drunks and mendicants who make the subway their home.

At last the train rumbles in and, after another struggle with outgoing passengers, we finally get aboard. If luck is with us we may find a seat, but it is odds-on that we shall stand, for, barring the occasional lulls, there are never enough seats. (During the rush hours, both morning and evening, there is not even enough standing room, but of these dreadful periods more will be said later.) There will be several delays before we get under way: just as the doors slide shut, a belated arrival will lunge through the turnstile and across the platform, and some obliging fellow, exhibiting that courtesy which manifests itself in the New

York proletarian only at the inconvenience of a great many others, will hold the door open, thus locking the brakes. When the doors do close, and the standees brace themselves for the lurching start, there is yet another delay, as if the pilot were deciding whether to go backward or forward. This hesitancy, of course, causes everybody to relax momentarily, just in time to be caught off guard when the lurch finally materializes. There is a frantic clawing for straps, supporting irons, and other passengers' bodies, and our underground excursion has at last begun.

II

Our period of waiting, as we soon discover, was a fitting prelude to the journey proper. We travel at no great speed (averaging less than twenty-two miles per hour), but from the horrific clatter that has set up we could well be burning up the rails. The coach rocks and sways, creaking in every joint as though at the point of collapsing. Our conveyance is about the size of a railway car, but the seats are set parallel with, and against, the side-walls — hard benches covered with grimy matting. There are no dividing arm rests, and thus a dozen people are enabled to loll

at their ease and occupy enough space for twenty; one man stretched out in slumber or drunken stupor (this is a common sight at all hours) takes up enough room for four.

Standing, besides ourselves, are about fifteen people, most of whom are clustered about the doors as though fearful of not making their escape when their destination is reached. Few of them are reading newspapers, however, this pastime being reserved for the rush hours when elbow room is at a premium. These people, in the main, are singularly uninteresting; save for those occasional specimens who board the subway clad in evening clothes, ski suits, riding habits, and what not, they have the wooden sameness of palings on a fence. The car itself provides an appropriate background. The walls are painted a bilious green, the floors are of cement, painted red, and both are overlaid with the grime of many months' accumulation. Over each row of seats, running the length of the coach, there is another gaudy procession of advertisements—more toothy and naked females giving us the come-on for more breakfast foods, cosmetics, hygienic articles, patent-medicines and the like, and likewise adorned with mustaches and lewd inscriptions.

If the weather is cold, the car will likely be even colder, for the end doors are nearly always left open; if it is warm, the fans whirring impotently overhead will do little to circulate the stifling, sudorific air.

At each stop there is a repetition of the struggle between incoming and outgoing passengers. At Fourteenth Street and at Thirty-fourth Street, the train will fill up with women shoppers, laden with purchases from the department stores; the younger and prettier ones will be given seats by amorously inclined males, but the others will stand. And if by chance the train's swaying motion should cause one of these tired but unattractive women to stumble against a seated male, she will receive sharp advice to watch where she's stepping. Should she drop one of her packages, or even fall sprawling on the floor, she can expect no gallantry from her fellow New Yorkers. At Times Square, the train will almost invariably be packed with new passengers—there will be seats aplenty in the front and rear coaches, but to reach them would necessitate walking a hundred feet or so. Among these newcomers there will be several delivery boys from the wholesale houses, each carrying enough merchandise to displace several paying passengers.

There will also be at least one newsboy, one panhandler, and one Comrade chiseling funds to Save Democracy in Spain; this trio, all of whose activities are in open violation of the law, will elbow their way through the packed train, employing but slightly different techniques to add to the pandemonium. Again, there will be, depending on the hour, either a swarm of school children who run wild over the train, or a group of adolescents who amuse themselves, but nobody else, by singing loudly the latest song hits and holding shag contests in the crowded aisles.

So it goes, from station to station. After fifteen minutes or so, unless you are an old hand at subway travel, you will no longer be able to breathe the foul, stuffy air — your lungs ache, your head reels, your heart pounds, your body is stiff from grasping the too-high strap. If we are lucky, we may find a seat when the train arrives at 125th Street, but probably we shall stand as far as 157th Street. By that time, however, we have been shoved and jolted into a state bordering upon semi-coma: we are so numb, physically and mentally, that it no longer matters whether we sit or stand. We have only forty more blocks to go, so what the hell?

III

Such, as I have said, is what you may expect, with slight variations, on any subway at almost any hour when the so-called masses are astir. Some of the grievances I have listed may seem captious enough, taken singly, but their cumulative effect is nothing short of dreadful. And, worse yet, they are not half the story. Indeed, a fair sized book could be written, concerned solely with the aforementioned rush hours, though to describe properly this phenomenon of human behavior would strain the talents of our best horror writers. For me to do any justice to this orgy of *Schrecklichkeit*, therefore, it will be necessary that you co-operate by visualizing, if you can, two-million-odd human beings obsessed with the desire to get to or from home, and all trying, apparently, to ride the same train.

This pageant of panic begins in the streets, and is concentrated at the various station entrances. These entrances, from 7 to 9 A.M., and from 5 to 7 P.M. resemble nothing so much as ant-holes immediately before a rain-storm. The sidewalks within a twenty-foot radius are clogged with a moiling mass of cursing, sweating humanity, all hell-bent upon getting downstairs

before the others. Elbows, shoulders, and even fists are employed in this weird jousting; clothing is torn, hats and packages are dropped and trampled; participants sometimes are painfully, if not seriously, injured; passersby have been known to become enmeshed in the surging mass, and swept down the stairs along with the others.

Downstairs, the platforms are packed to the walls with more flight-obsessed humans. As each train arrives, the pack rushes to the very edge of the platform, heedless of the danger of falling beneath the wheels. If the station is anywhere above Canal Street, the train will already be packed to the eaves, but the whole crowd tries to get aboard, and it is amazing to see how near they come to succeeding. Their lack of success, moreover, is in no wise the fault of the guards — these fellows, most of whom are husky brutes of Neanderthal mien and disposition, seemingly have been trained to perform but one service, namely, to pack two more people into a car where there is no room for one. They perform this function in a fashion that would make a champion sardine-packer slit his gullet from sheer envy, and they require no co-operation from the passenger other than that he stand close enough to be collared

and hurled into the train. Just how many standees the coach-designers estimated each could accommodate, I don't know, but their most generous guess would fall short of the number the guards manage to jam inside the doors. A great many passengers, however, fight their way aboard without the guards' ungentle assistance. And I use the verb in its literal sense, for the more aggressive subway commuters will stop at nothing short of mayhem to find a place on the train, and they make no exceptions for sex, age, or infirmity.

Inside the trains is a scene of indescribable chaos. Passengers are packed together so tightly that they can hardly wriggle a finger. Feet are trampled, shins kicked, ribs gouged, and joints wrenched in the every-man-for-himself battle for seats or standing room. Couples who have become separated struggle vainly to reunite themselves. Children wail in terror. Weakly-constituted people often faint, particularly in hot weather, though they rarely find enough space to fall down in. To make matters worse, the trains move even slower than ordinarily, and, as I have said, there is no perceptible increase in their number. This makes for longer stops, of course, as it takes considerable time for the outgoing pas-

sengers to make their way through doors that are crowded with people who are trying to get aboard. Worst of all, however, is the ear-splitting racket of the train as it crashes through the tunnel.

Subjection to such horror, day in and day out, undoubtedly tends to create a serious mental condition. At all events, it cannot be without significance that the New York City subways enjoy such great popularity as instruments of self-destruction. Scarcely a week passes that some man or woman does not go the Dutch route by "jumping or falling", to use the newspaper phrase, beneath the wheels of a subway train. (There is no sensation, incidentally, comparable to waiting half an hour while your train is jacked up in order that a finely ground carcass can be removed.)

With such intolerable conditions prevailing, it is perhaps only natural that the subways should attract perverts and criminals of all types. Mashers, degenerates, and pick-pockets find the crowded trains a paradise. Criminals who specialize in robbing drunks, go about their business with a boldness that is almost incredible, steering the victim into the vestibule under the pretense of being friends trying to get him home, taking whatever is in his pockets, and

leaving him propped against a door in such a fashion that he will fall out on the platform when it opens. Even the platforms are unsafe late at night, and become increasingly so with every day. Only last year, a man was murdered and robbed in a subway washroom in the very heart of Times Square. During the ensuing newspaper hullabaloo, attention was called to the fact that there had been numerous similar incidents, subway employees having been stuck up as well as passengers, and there was the usual announcement by the police of a "drive" to end such depredations. So far, the only evidence of such a campaign has been the locking of washrooms at 9 P.M. The subways have special policemen, of course, but their duties are confined almost exclusively to apprehending those people who don't think the ride is worth a nickel, and put slugs in the turnstiles instead. As for the guards, they perform their specialty of packing too many people into the trains, and then disappear until the next stop. It is virtually impossible to find one of these fellows while the train is in motion, though finding one will do you little good if you seek information about where to get off for a certain address. The chances are he can't tell you what day of the week it is.

In addition to the manifold evils prevailing generally there are others peculiar to the individual lines. The city's Independent Subway, while newer and hence a shade cleaner, has no safety devices on the car doors to prevent their trapping a passenger who might be half in and half out, and there are no signal gongs to warn you of their closing. Not long ago, a man was thus caught by the door closing on his arm, and was killed when the train pulled out. The BMT (Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit) has perfected a method of badgering passengers who change from express trains to locals, and vice versa, that is truly marvelous: you step from one train, and there is the other, waiting, its doors wide open; before you can cross the platform, however, the doors slam shut and the train leaves. It must have taken years to develop such precision in timing. And should it be your lot to transfer from the BMT's Broadway line to its Williamsburg (Brooklyn) division, you will have to walk about 300 yards through a series of winding tunnels to make the change — this because a short-cut passage is closed, and for no conceivable reason save that it gives employment to the guard who snarlingly forbids you to use it. A similar hike awaits you in using

the IRT's shuttle train at Forty-second Street, which connects the company's East- and West-side lines. The shuttle stops a good city block from the East-side station, and you walk the rest of the way along a narrow, jerry-built wooden platform which was put in "temporary" use more than a decade ago, and is nearly always blocked with peddlers and idlers. You can buy practically anything in the subways — except courteous treatment and a degree of comfort.

What is to blame? More than anything else, probably, the five-cent fare. This has been a magic vote-getter for every demagogue from the pompous Red Mike Hylan to the howling dervish La Guardia. It has become the sacred right of the New York proletarian to wallow in the filth of his subways for a five-cent piece. Little use to tell him that he pays the rest of his fare in indirect taxes; that if he paid it all at once at the turnstile he would have some chance of getting better service. So the merry-go-round continues: the subway operators say they can't do better at the price; the politicians shout about the sanctity of the five-cent fare; and the miserable New Yorkers each morning and evening endure the most awful ride in the world.

WHAT PRICE GOOD NEIGHBOR?

BY LAWRENCE DENNIS

EVENTS in Mexico and throughout Latin America are at last revealing the much-heralded Good Neighbor Policy for just what it is — futile incense burned by the State Department before the altars of Liberalism and Internationalism. This perfumed smoke-screen has hitherto successfully masked the steady American retreat before the wave of anti-Americanism and anti-Capitalism which has been gathering momentum ever since 1927 when Dwight Morrow made a reputation for himself by an almost complete surrender of American rights. Like that other illustrious American Liberal, Woodrow Wilson, who was largely responsible for the American policies which have proved disastrous for our interests in Mexico, Mr. Morrow is spared the contemplation of the results of his Liberalism. Today, through the haze of the Good Neighbor incense, the indubitable facts of the secular trend in Latin America towards anti-Americanism and anti-Capitalism are becoming all too apparent.

The ideal of playing the Good Neighbor is not the subject of this article. That ideal needs neither explanation nor defense. Everyone understands it. No one disapproves of it. The facts for us to face are the loss of American prestige and property, and the definitely-inimical present course of events. A serious state of affairs confronts us in Mexico; it has been developing, with our assistance, for a long time past, and it is getting worse. Situations similar to that which is now acute in Mexico are brewing elsewhere in Latin America, notably in Cuba and Colombia. It is the spread of this sort of thing within gunshot of our borders, and our contribution to it, that call for study and action.

To establish the fact that we are in full retreat in Latin America, it should suffice merely to mention a few recent events: the expropriation, without reasonable possibility of just compensation, of over \$200,000,000 worth of American oil properties in Mexico; the continued default on over 85 per cent of

more than \$1,500,000,000 of American loans to Latin American countries; and the continuing spread of anti-American, totalitarian dictatorships. It is as unnecessary to prove our retreat in Latin America as it is to prove that we are now in a depression.

Let us then, at once, proceed to the more fruitful discussion of why and how American policies have failed. For it is only through changes in our policies that we can hope to do anything to protect our rights and promote our interests in this hemisphere. There is no authority to whom we may appeal for justice, as an individual may to a court of law. Our ingenuous Liberals, in trying to represent our interests in Mexico, have long proceeded on the absurd assumption that our problem was one of securing justice by due process of local law: actually, as they point out, the present state-operation of foreign-owned oil properties is contrary to the Mexican Constitution. But could anything be more utterly irrelevant than for Mr. Roosevelt to protest against the confiscation of American property by the Mexican New Deal on the ground of unconstitutionality? No wonder the Mexican brother-New-Dealers laugh up their sleeves. American Liberals, it would seem, have not

yet been told the facts of life in totalitarian countries.

Our actual choice in the matter is clear-cut: through realistic changes in our policies we must seek to shape events in Latin America more to our interests, or else allow them to follow their present course to our increasing detriment. A hands-off policy is quite impossible; we cannot help influencing events in neighboring lands. For instance, in Mexico we have subsidized the Socialist New Deal and anti-American campaign by buying at absurdly high prices gold and silver to a value of \$71,051,000 in 1937; \$71,111,000 in 1936; and \$78,269,000 in 1935. Furthermore, as everyone familiar with Mexico, the five Central American Republics, and with Cuba, Haiti, Santo Domingo, Panama, Venezuela, and Colombia well knows, no government can long remain in power in any one of these countries without the co-operation of the United States Government. In the case of Mexico this is especially true. So long as we prevent arms and expeditionary movements from crossing our border with a revolutionary destination in Mexico, and so long as we allow the recognized government of Mexico to obtain unlimited supplies and credit in this

country, the overthrow of such government is virtually impossible. Conversely, no government in Mexico can resist revolution more than a year if we put it under our embargo and, at the same time, open our border to its enemies.

At present, therefore, the net result of our playing the Good Neighbor is subsidization of the Mexican Government in return for outright confiscation of American properties, virtual suppression of American enterprise, and practical exclusion of American immigration to Mexico even for executive and technical employment. Incidentally, we are also employing about a million Mexicans in this country and carrying almost as many more on our Relief rolls.

It would seem self-evident that, inasmuch as we must influence the course of events in Latin America, as already briefly indicated, we should try to make our influence count for the protection of our interests. But that is precisely what we cannot, and must not, do under the canons of post-Wilson Liberalism. We must now uphold Liberal and Internationalist principles rather than protect concrete American rights. The result, not unnaturally, is that our prestige and our interests in Latin America are fast going to the dogs. When Porfirio

Diaz was driven from Mexico in 1910, our investment stake there exceeded two billion dollars: to-day it is reduced to some eight hundred million. The relevant facts are that, as matters now stand, we cannot protect Americans and American property in Latin America, we cannot collect the debts legally owing us, and we have not reformed our neighbors from their il-Liberal ways.

II

For purposes of historical perspective it may be recalled that there have been five major directing ideas in our Latin American relations during the past hundred years. They are as follows:

(1) Land for Settlement—the annexation of Texas and conquest of California through war with Mexico;

(2) National Security—the acquisition of the Canal Zone and naval bases for the defense of trade routes;

(3) Dollar Diplomacy—loans to governments to permit unproductive and extravagant expenditures and to allow fat commissions for international bankers, followed by diplomatic dunning for unpayable debts, financial receiverships where the country is small enough,

the government weak enough, and our Marines strong enough to enforce the necessary arrangements;

(4) The Diplomacy of Righteousness — the attempt to reform Latin Americans by the use of non-recognition and pontifical utterances by legalistic Liberals in our Government;

(5) The Good Neighbor Policy — the aromatic smoke-screen to cover retreat.

By way of contrast it will not be amiss to emphasize the success of our earlier policies of land-and-security diplomacy. We got Texas, California, and the Canal Zone. We have settled the land taken from Mexico and built on it a flourishing civilization. We have built the Panama Canal. What we took and settled, we can exploit and defend. It pays. It works. The only imperialism that works or pays is that of land colonization and national security. Financial imperialism, on the other hand, like moral imperialism, neither works nor pays. This is proved by the defaulted South American bonds and the South American dictatorships of today — after twenty-five years of our attempts at moral uplift with help from the bankers and the Marines. Financial imperialism is built on a banker's schemes for making money out of unproduc-

tive loans to incompetent governments. Moral imperialism rests on a Liberal idealist's fantastic dreams of changing human nature — Indian nature at that — and a Liberal lawyer's rationalizations of such dreams. Land imperialism grows out of the hunger of strong men for land on which to settle, to work, and to breed: when successful, as it was in the winning of the West, it turns a wilderness into a civilized community.

Nothing is so fatal to a nation's interests as pursuing the unattainable. Making loans which cannot be repaid culminates in a period during which no more such loans can be made, and in which uncollectible claims are pressed. This state of affairs has characterized our relations with Mexico since the fall of Porfirio Diaz twenty-eight years ago. During the dance-of-the-millions of the late 'Twenties, Mexico was not able to borrow, while the other Latin American demagogues and dictators were financing their WPA projects with the easy money of gullible American investors. Then Mexico was being dunned for unpayable debts contracted two decades earlier. Since 1930, when our foreign lending stopped and the collection of what had just been lent began to prove impossible, most of Latin Amer-

ica has been in the financial situation of Mexico ever since the fall of Diaz; that is, unable to pay old debts or to borrow new money, and increasingly irked by demands for politically-impossible payments.

The failure of Reform Diplomacy, however, has hurt us more than the making of bad loans and our futile efforts to collect them. Reform Diplomacy had a simple set of ends and means. The ends were the prevention of revolution and dictatorship, and the conversion of peoples, who are from 70 to 90 per cent Indian and from 40 to 80 per cent illiterate, to the political ways of the Swiss and the Scandinavians. The means were non-recognition and moral suasion. Mr. Wilson inaugurated the reform diplomacy in 1913 by refusing to recognize Huerta as President of Mexico, although he was in *de facto* control and although the British Government, the American Ambassador in Mexico, and both the American and British colonies in Mexico were unanimous in urging Huerta's recognition. Huerta, whom Mr. Wilson called "unspeakable", was probably the last Mexican Conservative who had a chance of saving Mexico from the drift to Communism. Mexican Conservatives, under strong American guidance, could

have carried out enough reforms to avert the disasters of today. But Mr. Wilson did not see the problem in that light. For him the salvation of Mexico lay in abstract Liberal principles, and not in concrete Conservative personalities. Of course, neither President Wilson nor Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, who carried on the Wilsonian policy in Latin America under a Republican successor to Mr. Wilson—notwithstanding the defeat of Wilsonian internationalism in the elections of 1920—imagined for a moment that they were setting Mexico on the path to Communism. Such Liberals never envisaged the present-day realities of Communism and Fascism. They simply did not understand human nature and their times. Our diplomacy favors the demagogue because he talks Liberalism, and bars the Conservative because he does not talk it and because he uses methods only by means of which Conservative government can be established and maintained in such countries as Mexico.

The popular argument that it does no harm to pursue high ideals even if they are not fully realizable is rebutted by our experiment with Prohibition and Britain's experiment with the League of Nations.

The failure of government discredits its government with the stigma of failure, thereby encouraging anarchy. It does not pay to proclaim unenforceable laws or principles, especially in Latin America. Governmental attempts to enforce the unenforceable almost always mean not only the failure of such attempts but a failure also to enforce enforceable laws.

Of course, our State Department never fails to protest when an American injury is brought to its attention. The trouble is that we protest too much, and enforce our demands too little. For a State Department conducted on Liberal principles, the confiscation of American property in Mexico is in the same class with the bombing of Chinese in China or Spaniards in Spain — it is something to protest about, but it is not something to remedy with effective action. Beginning way back in 1916, President Wilson sent General Pershing into Mexico to catch the bandit Villa who had murdered in cold blood seventeen Americans living peaceably in their homes in the American town of Columbus, New Mexico. Villa survived to a ripe old age in peace and honor on his stolen booty, uncaught by Pershing and unpunished by Carranza whom Mr. Wilson recog-

nized as President of Mexico. Is it strange that since then American rights have not been respected by Mexico?

No difference is seen by our Washington Liberals between wrongs to Americans within a gunshot of our borders and wrongs to Chinese six thousand miles away. They are all violations of international law — subjects for protest. The worst of this diplomacy is not only its failure to protect, collect, and reform, but the fact that, in the last analysis, it is calculated to get us into a world war for an impossible ideal, after we have failed to make a simple use of force to protect an American right. We could have caught and hanged Villa. We could have made Mexico safe for American lives and property. But we could not make the world safe for Democracy. Mr. Wilson was too proud to fight for American rights in Mexico, but ready to send four million Americans into war to fight for other nations and unattainable ideals. That was the quintessence of Liberalism and futility. Had we made ourselves respected by Mexico in 1916, we should probably not have received the provocation offered by the Germans in 1917. We have seen that Liberalism and Internationalism do not keep us out of war.

Confronted by the Mexican expropriation *coup* of last March against the foreign oil companies — the latest one of a series of confiscatory measures beginning back in 1917 and involving seizures of millions of acres of American owned agricultural lands in Mexico — Secretary Hull, on July 21, sent a note demanding arbitration of American claims for prompt payment of just compensation for property expropriated. While the language was stiff for a diplomatic note, it was just an empty gesture calculated to serve only the following important purposes:

(1) To provide the State Department with a face-saving reply to all queries and criticisms — this Government is doing everything possible to protect American interests.

(2) To allow this Government to do absolutely nothing effective for the enforcement of American rights in Mexico while displaying great zeal in long-range verbal exchanges.

(3) To allow the Mexican Government to go full speed ahead with its anti-foreign policies assured that it has only to swap notes with Washington and maintain a willingness to meet its obligation to pay compensation as soon as practicable, which, as every realist

knows, means never. (Within two months after the delivery of the Hull arbitration note, Mexico expropriated several thousand acres more of American owned agricultural land in Mexico for which no compensation has been, or ever will be, paid.)

In brief, Secretary Hull's lofty, platitudinous diplomacy, involving a generous use of ten-dollar lawyer-words about international law, arbitration, and the Good Neighbor policy, puts the rights of American citizens in Mexico in the same category with the claims of our Government against the Allied Governments for war debt payments. Nothing could be sweeter for Mexican Communism. If our late allies, Britain and France, can get away with not paying their debts to us, why should not our Latin American neighbors pile up big debts to us by expropriating our citizens' property and then, like our good allies, go on owing us colossal sums until these impossible debts, after being successively scaled down, are finally wiped out in an outburst of Good-Neighborly sentiment and in the interest of building up some more unpayable debts to us? The precedents now being set in our relations with Mexico invite wholesale confiscation of American property through-

out South America in the near future. Indeed, our Latin American neighbors will be much less imaginative and realistic than I give them credit for, if they do not grasp the easy logic of these precedents. American copper interests in Chile, whence Kennecott derives about 40 per cent of its copper and Anaconda 70 per cent, are likely to be the next important victims of anti-foreign confiscatory policies in Latin America, following the elections of next October. Costa Rica, on August twenty-third, expropriated properties of the American-owned Electric Bond and Share Company, a public-utility holding-company owning or controlling extensive utility properties throughout South America. The Mexican example is already showing its effects.

III

Reform Diplomacy not only fails to prevent war, to protect Americans, and to reform Latin Americans, but it also encourages Communism. Translated in terms comprehensible to Latin American temperaments, Wilson's New Freedom and Roosevelt's New Deal equal a Communist manifesto. Indians and Latins are naturalistic and logical. They lack either a Prot-

estant or an Anglo Saxon ethic. To them righteousness is a good reason, but not the real reason; tolerance of insults and injuries means weakness. Communism they can understand because it is traditional with the Indians. As for the Class Struggle or any other kind of fight, it is most intelligible to Indo-Latins.

Of course, President Cardenas of Mexico and his one-party State are not Marxian Communists by strict definition. But neither is Soviet Russia. Why quibble over terms? Communism has advanced farther in Mexico than in most countries outside Russia. It is not to Marx or Moscow that we owe the Communist advance in Mexico or the United States today: it is rather to the political necessities of Liberal demagogues who have to keep on trying to give the masses more for producing less, and who are incapable of enforcing social discipline. In America it is being done by inflation and soaking the rich; in Mexico, by confiscation of foreign-owned property.

Should we intervene to check Communism in Mexico? Certainly not. We should first check it at home. Should we intervene anywhere in Latin America to collect loans to governments? Certainly not. Should we use economic and

military force, if necessary, to exact respect for American lives and property? Certainly yes; because such a policy could be made effective and advantageous.

Some reasons why we should neither intervene nor exert strong diplomatic pressure on behalf of defaulted loans are: First, such loans, representing commercially non-reproductive investments, are politically unpayable, exactly like our war loans to Britain and France, also in default; second, pressure should never be used for practically unattainable objectives. Some reasons why we should, on the other hand, vigorously support American direct investments such as those of the fruit, oil, mining, manufacturing, shipping, and merchandising companies in Latin America, as well as the rights of American citizens, as individuals, to live, work, and carry on legitimate business operations in these countries are: First, direct investments and business activities, unlike the defaulted loans, represent productive and beneficial interests for all concerned; second, they demand only the protection of laws and officials having a due respect for personal and property rights. (Unlike the defaulted bonds, these interests demand no unbearable tax increase or disastrous money

transfers.) The distinction just made between loans and direct investments is essentially a practical one. Our diplomacy must pursue only the attainable and support only the enforceable.

After all, we need Latin American oil, raw materials, and markets. But as we are not prepared to colonize Mexico or any other Latin American country, and as we do not want racial assimilation, our only hope in Latin America lies in developing native governments more respectful of our rights and more amenable to our demands. If we scrap Reform Diplomacy and concentrate for several years on the pursuit of attainable objectives, we may be able to turn the present bloody tide of anti-Americanism and Communism. But we must accept the responsibilities of power. Where we impose respect for our rights, we must also impose respect for human rights. The destiny of the strong is to rule. If we cannot rule directly in Latin America, we can, to a considerable extent, influence a native ruling-class.

This is not the same thing as trying to play the Good Neighbor with those who repeatedly trample on our rights. We must obey the commands of our destiny, or renounce it. By the Good Neighbor Policy we are renouncing it.

ANSCHLUSS WITH CANADA?

BY RICHARD W. SCOTT

“ONTARIO casts her thirteen votes for Roosevelt.” These words will not gladden the heart of FDR in the Democratic Convention of 1940, but if the dynasty lasts they may mark the swing to son Jimmy at some later convention. For it is my firm belief that history will follow her tedious path of repetition, and that Canada will eventually form a political union with that country which exercises the greatest influence on her material development—the United States.

Canada, as a new and, numerically, a small nation, has always been subject to outside influence. At first France was dominant: her people provided the new land with settlers, her language and religion were pre-eminent. Following a successful war, England displaced France, and the Nineteenth Century was indisputably an era of English domination. What of the present, and what of the more important future? Let us contrast the recent influence of both Great Britain and the United States. As

an aid to simplification in this study I have divided their influences into three main headings. First, the influence exerted directly on the main body of the Canadian people by migration to and from her two great mentors. Secondly, the influence each exerts through trade relations and investments. Thirdly, I have tried to measure the cultural influence exerted through radio, reading, sports, etc. The influence of geography on drawing parts of Canada and the United States closer together has also been briefly remarked. Lastly, I would draw attention to the real implication behind these words spoken by Lord Tweedsmuir, now Governor-General of Canada, before the United States Senate in April, 1936:

We [Canada and the United States] have the same definition of what constitutes greatness and goodness in human character . . . we give our admiration and affection to the same type of leadership. Will anyone deny that your great men and our great men are singularly alike at bottom? . . . We and you have the same tasks before us. I am especially interested,

in Canada, to discover that nearly all our problems are paralleled by yours. We have the same economic problems. Senators, I cannot imagine a greater bond between two nations than that they should engage in the same tasks and for the same purposes.

We in Canada are accustomed to think of our population as being mainly of British descent, with a large minority of French-Canadians. We are also accustomed to look upon the British Isles as our main source of immigration. Are either of these beliefs true? The first census of Canada was taken in 1871. In that year 60.63 per cent of the people described themselves as being of British descent and 30.53 as being of French origin. Ten years later the British ratio had fallen to 58.93 and the French to 30.03. Here are the ratios for the four census years of this century:

Year	British	French
1901	57.03	30.71
1911	55.46	27.12
1921	55.40	27.91
1931	51.86	28.21

In the light of these and further figures quoted below, there can be no doubt that today the British content of our population is less than 50 per cent.

From January 1, 1931, to December 31, 1936, Canada welcomed to her shores 97,899 immigrants. Of

these only 19,875 came from the United Kingdom, while 53,642 came from the United States. In addition to these immigrants, however, there were 67,589 Canadians who had left their country with the intention of living permanently in the United States and later returned to their native heath. Actually, therefore, Canada had a total immigration during the six-year period of 165,488, of whom 121,231 had for a varying length of time lived in the United States. That is to say, three-out-of-four people taking up or reclaiming Canadian domicile during the last six years will be in the habit of saying, "Now in the States we did it this way". Not only will they say this but they will do things in the American fashion, and thus influence many of those with whom they come in contact.

There is another side to the question of migration. During the six years just past, Canada has actually lost population to Britain. The *Canada Year Book*, quoting the *British Statistical Abstract*, reveals that, during this period, 86,480 people left British North America to take up residence in the British Isles. This means that we have on balance lost a total of 67,605 persons to Britain. Canadian records make no estimate of the

migration to the United States, but the *Year Book* for 1936 says on page 200 "official returns indicate that the movement of population is definitely towards Canada". In the light of these statistics it is undeniable that, in the matter of population, British influence has decreased and is decreasing, while American influence has, and is, increasing rapidly.

II

American trade is the life-blood of Canada. We cannot live without the goods the United States sells us. We cannot live unless the United States buys our surpluses. Every Canadian boom has been linked with an American boom; every Canadian depression has followed a set-back to the south. Look at the figures revealing American dominance of Canada's trade and industry, and estimate how soon the flag will follow and make formal the conquest already won by trade. The statistical table in the next column prepared from figures issued by the Canadian government's Department of Trade and Commerce shows the Dominion's export and import trade with the United States and with Great Britain.

An economist given these two

CANADIAN IMPORTS		
	FROM GREAT BRITAIN	FROM U. S.
<i>Year</i>	<i>per cent</i>	<i>per cent</i>
1931	16.5	64.5
1932	18.4	60.8
1933	21.3	57.2
1934	24.2	54.9
1935	21.4	58.1
1936	21.0	58.6
1937	<u>19.3</u>	<u>58.7</u>
<i>Average:</i>	20.3	59.0

CANADIAN EXPORTS		
	TO GREAT BRITAIN	TO U. S.
<i>Year</i>	<i>per cent</i>	<i>per cent</i>
1931	27.0	43.1
1932	28.5	42.2
1933	34.5	36.9
1934	42.9	32.7
1935	38.1	39.9
1936	37.3	41.8
1937	<u>37.9</u>	<u>40.5</u>
<i>Average:</i>	35.1	39.6

tables could write books dealing with their significance; from them we can draw a clear picture of Canada's dependence on her trade with the United States, and of the influence which the United States exerts through that trade. The first fact that strikes us is that, through the period 1931-1937, the United States supplied Canada with from 55 to 60 per cent of all the goods Canada bought abroad. During the same period Great Britain supplied from 16 to 24 per cent. This means that of all the foreign goods brought into Canada, three-fifths have been supplied by the United States, one-fifth by Great Britain

and one-fifth by the rest of the world. And remember that every dollar's worth of goods we use from the United States influences us towards the adoption of American modes of living, American standards, and American tastes.

The second fact of importance is that while we swap almost dollar-for-dollar with the United States, the same cannot be said of our trade with Great Britain. While Canadian exports to, and imports from, the United States have increased, in a general way, at about the same rate, there has been a constantly-widening favorable balance of trade in Canada's relations with Great Britain. This is a serious matter. It indicates that, despite the best efforts to promote British trade with Canada, we have about reached the top of our ability to use British-made goods. Despite tariff preferences, Britain has recently supplied Canada with a decreasing proportion of goods, while the American ratio has remained stationary or even, in the last year or two, slightly increased.

Another facet of the economic link bringing Canada and the United States closer and closer is to be found in the vast American investment in the former country. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics estimates that the entire total

of invested capital in Canada is approximately \$18,000,000,000. Of this, \$4,000,000,000, or 22 per cent, is owned in the United States. American holdings in government securities alone total \$1,087,438,000. These tremendous figures are worth remembering when we consider, as we must, the possibility of the United States entering Canada to prevent conquest by a third power.

III

An influence both economic and cultural on the relations between Canada and the United States is to be found in the tourist trade. If every good American goes to Paris when he dies, every solvent Canadian hopes to spend the winter in Florida or California. It is estimated that American visitors to Canada have spent no less than \$1,373,045,000 in this country since 1930, and Canadians visiting the United States during the same period spent \$399,525,000. The movement between peoples of the two countries has become so extensive that each has learned how little they differ.

During the seven years under review, Canada spent abroad no less than \$77,534,207 for reading material. This works out at an

average of slightly over eleven millions each year, or about one dollar per head for every Canadian. Of this amount, \$58,685,641.03, or 75.69 per cent, was spent in the United States; and only \$15,150,184.05, or 19.54 per cent, in Great Britain. Thus, in the cultural field of literature, the balance tips heavily toward American, and against British, influence. These figures, however, do not tell the whole story: included in the seventy-seven millions of dollars' worth of reading material is much that was spent for scientific text-books, Bibles, prayer-books, and other unlikely agents of propaganda. If we consider only the newspapers and magazines imported into Canada, we get a fairer picture of the weight of American influence. For these active, even if unconscious, advance-agents of foreign cultural ideals, Canada spent in the seven years no less than \$24,524,357 in foreign countries — and \$23,025,918.08, or 93.89 per cent, was spent in the United States, and only \$1,429,770.01, or 5.83 per cent, in Britain. And this result came about despite the imposition for most of the period of a discriminatory Canadian tariff against American products. Happily this tax on knowledge is now repealed.

The news in our papers, too, is

predominantly American. Apart from political news, we get no information of life in England whatever. I know nothing of Manchester's civic affairs, but am kept by the Canadian papers perfectly in touch with the latest developments on the Dewey front in New York. Our financial pages devote columns daily to a report of transactions on the New York stock exchange, but nothing to the trading in London. SEC and all its works are praised or damned as something intimately affecting Canadian investors; but who knows anything of the rules of the London stock exchange? During the summer months all our papers devote several columns daily to stories dealing with the games in the National and American baseball leagues, but less than half a column a week on the English cricket matches. A thousand Canadian boys can discuss Dizzy Dean's abilities to any one who has heard of Jack Hobbs. I can bet almost daily on horse-races at any American track, but can find no bookie who will allow me to lose money on my choice for the English Derby.

So permeated is Canada with American advertising that the National Broadcasting Corporation of New York, in selling time, of-

fers hook-ups which include stations controlled by a company in turn owned by the Dominion Government. When attacked for this state of affairs, the Canadian Minister in control of radio, himself a former American and a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, asserted, "No matter what you put on, they will still listen to Charlie McCarthy". In this one sentence was summed up Canada's whole radio problem, and the influence that this form of entertainment has had in spreading American ideas throughout the Dominion.

IV

Geographically, of course, it is ludicrous to attempt to divide the American continent in separate countries with a boundary line running east and west. A glance at a relief map will show that any natural boundary between the two countries is impossible, and that where the line of the 49th latitude serves as one, it is only because Mr. Pierce did not mean what he said when he campaigned for the Presidency on the stirring cry of "54.40 or fight".

Here, then, is the situation. Canada, through the influence of migration, trade culture, and geogra-

phy is becoming, or indeed has become, a part of the United States in all save the formal act of transfer and the necessary adjustment of comparatively minor matters. There is, however, one great obstacle to be overcome before the union can be completed in fact. It is that natural inertia which is the support of all existing governments. It will take a shock, and a big shock, to overcome this inertia; but the shock may come at any time. Any one of several possible events would bring it about.

First, and most likely, is the possible dissolution by peaceful means of the present Dominion of Canada. As States go, Canada is still in her childhood, and childhood is a delicate age. The new-born babe may not live. In the Province of Quebec a large, and increasingly active, group demand separation from the rest of Canada. It is quite possible that this group will ultimately prevail in Quebec and that the Province will demand, and win, the right to withdraw from the federation. If she makes her demand more-or-less unanimously, the right will no doubt be granted. We have passed the time when civil wars can be fought on this continent. Then, for want of any other place to go, the remaining provinces will seek admission to

the American Union. While this idea may startle many of my fellow-Canadians, its validity is accepted by many authorities on the British Empire. Sir Evelyn Wrench, a well-known English writer and student of Imperial affairs, recently visited Canada and, writing in the London press of his findings, said:

Confederation was an absurdity. Neither economically nor geographically is Canada an entity. The real Canada is the St. Lawrence area, which should be a French speaking Dominion. The rest of Canada should either become local dominions or be absorbed by the United States.

This solution is the more probable if the second shock comes timed with it. That second shock is that Britain should engage in a war. In that case Canada would be torn to pieces. It is certain that no matter what the provocation to Britain, there will not be even the surface unanimity of feeling that Canada showed in the last war. If she does not join wholeheartedly,

the drift to the States will be intensified. The spirit of Empire, already reduced to a formalism by the Statute of Westminster and the bickerings at Ottawa in 1932, would never stand the strain of war.

Finally, there is always a remote chance that some third country might undertake the conquest of Canada as an outlet for her excess population; in that case American intervention would be a foregone conclusion. Cuba, Haiti, and the Philippines bear witness to what intervention means.

Indeed, it might be said that we are faced, not with the likelihood of union with the United States, but only with a mild wonder as to which of three possible events will jar us into that re-arrangement of the map of North America nearer the obvious intentions of nature. "Ontario casts thirteen votes for Roosevelt" is more than a remote possibility. Its eventual consummation can be predicted confidently.



DEMOCRACY, 1938

By H. F. AMIEL

I do not deny the rights of Democracy, but I have no illusions as to the uses that will be made of those rights so long as wisdom is rare and pride abundant.

THE MASS-MAN TAKES OVER

BY RALPH ADAMS CRAM

SEVEN years ago I wrote a piece called "Why We Do Not Behave Like Human Beings" that was published in this magazine. For reasons best known to himself, the editor reprinted it in the recent August issue, and he now asks that I say anything more that occurs to me in continuation of the argument. My contention, it may be remembered, was that during the historic period of human life on this planet, a space of some six thousand years, there has been no *qualitative* advance in the character and potentiality of the race, either individually or in mass, and that therefore the Nineteenth-Century doctrine of progressive evolution is an illusion. I also suggested the theory that there is a basic mass of human potential, in itself sub-human, which is the matrix of actual humanity: unchanged in its nature during this same historic period, it is constantly added to, age after age, the process of evolution (or creation) being continuous. From this, by an equally continuous process, the

true *homo sapiens* emerges into the light. Finally, I contended that the just division between man and sub-man should be drawn, not between *homo sapiens* and *Pithecanthropus erectus*, but between man in his full and high estate and the undifferentiated matter of the matrix from which he is drawn.

Now, after seven years of experience and observation, I should like to offer an apology. The apology is to Neolithic Man, for I called the basic mass by his name. This was manifestly unjust to him. Of course we have little direct or documentary information as to his character and habits; but as our sub-human class has pursued its natural course, particularly during the period that has elapsed since the essay in question was written, it seems doubtful if his personal quality was quite as deplorable as that of his successors on the same plane today. The term Neolithic is undoubtedly inexact, but it may serve analogically because it means something in common usage.

Now as for the basic contention

in the essay in question, the events of the last seven years strengthen and enforce it in my own mind, and I am prepared to defend it under persecution. Since 1918 the descent towards Avernus, beginning tentatively, with occasional reactions to righteousness and sanity, has now become precipitate, and the momentum, at this writing, seems to be accelerating. I believe this to be due to the fact that the steady process of taking over all power by the basic mass-man, which has been in process in Europe for two centuries and in the United States for just half that time, has now become substantially complete; and to this fact is due our present parlous estate.

There is no lack of circumstantial evidence of this dominant control by the barbarian factor in human affairs, so notably intensified and expedited during the last seven years. The beginnings were made in this country at the time of the great social and political revolution personified in Andrew Jackson a century ago. The process became permanently established during Reconstruction and the Grant Administrations; went on to very lofty heights with the era of money-Capitalism, Big Business, and a technological-industrialism; and culminated with the

World War and its lamentable aftermath. Sometimes these evidences were obscure and the relation between effect and cause not wholly grasped, but they are clearer now, and we are justified in drawing the analogy. Keeping in mind the fact of the social substructure of the mass-man, and his nature as a potential, though partially-developed, human being, we have only to consider some of the current phenomena that demonstrate his present supremacy over society to see why society is now where it is.

There are certain concrete phenomena that are significant in themselves: the sort of men we elect to public office, and what they do when they get there; the kind of men who make big money and what they do with it; the type of social leaders and the way they conduct themselves in winter resorts, night clubs, and the divorce courts. Even more revealing, though by indirection, are things like Hollywood, the sort of personalities that run the show, and the commodity produced; the subway magazines, the tabloids, the pulps, and the thinly-veiled pornography of "Literature" generally; the common run of daily newspapers, not only in respect to their content and editorial quality,

but in their standards of value of the news, and their cheap and nasty make-up; the uncouth religions and flatulent philosophies that spring up like mushrooms; the blatant "Art", from post-office murals to sadistic surrealism and lunatic abstractionism. Perhaps the whole thing might be focalized in a recent event, highly appreciated by the public press, where seventy thousand citizens paid a million dollars to see a negro knock out a German in two minutes, thereby dislocating his opponent's vertebrae, and receiving some \$370,000 for the job.

To add another count in the indictment, crime has become distinctly low-class. Crime is always crime, but its tone is various. There was a certain elegance in Renaissance poisonings, a snap and go in the trade of the highwayman, a pictorial glamour in piracy. Even war as waged by Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed, Charlemagne, Napoleon, Washington, Lee, was not without its aspects of magnificence, with its sudden flashes of honor and magnanimity, and its pageantry that veiled, if it did not mitigate, its essential ugliness. Now we have changed all that. The racketeer and the gangster, the kidnaper and the thug are low and sordid phenomena characteristic of

the modern era, and they can boast of nothing to extenuate their degeneracy. As for war, in this epoch of enlightenment and high civilization, it has now taken on the color of the gangster and the sadist. Until 1916 it still could claim some quality of decency. Since then it has progressively corrupted into wholesale assassination and merciless slaughter. Civilians, women, children in undefended cities and open countryside are now fair marks for the airplane, the high explosive, and poison gas. Until lately there were "some things no fellow could do". Now the sky is the limit and hell has established its own law.

As I have said above, I attribute this current declension in culture and civilization to the taking over of all power by the ever-present, and in itself uniform, Neolithic type of man. This has come about as the result of the inter-play of two factors; the well-meaning but most ill-judged and inopportune Liberalism of the Nineteenth Century, and the coincident scientific and mechanical phenomena that differentiated that century from all others in history. Power — as this followed from the utilization of the energy inherent in coal and the possibilities in iron, as these were implemented by steam and

developed to a high point by applied physical science and an almost feverish human ingenuity — was a free gift to man without respect to age, color, or previous condition of servitude. This was a revolution, a stimulus, and an inspiration. At once the mind began to expand and to search for liberty through mechanical means. This process was accelerated by the Darwinian ideas of progressive evolution and the infiltration into England of the Continental schemes of political reorganization. Liberalism was linked with Humanitarianism, which was an expression of a sentimental revolt against the scandalous abuses inflicted on labor by the new industrialism. Democracy was in the air, and it was quite natural for the Liberals and Humanitarians to seize on this as the great panacea. One mark of Democracy was assumed to be universal suffrage; so the Liberals plumped for it, and in a short time, though step by step, this was achieved. Simultaneously Liberal principles worked their way into education, literature, religion, and, in fact, into almost every phase of society. It was all thoroughly well-meaning. With the best intentions in the world, the paving of hell went on apace.

But it was not the theories and

devices of Liberals and Humanitarians that were the chief moving cause in the social and political revolution of the Nineteenth Century. It was the release of Power through coal, and its utilization through the ingenious engines and mechanisms of the inventors and machinists, that made Democracy not only possible, but inevitable. James Watt was more potent than Rousseau. Power of one sort or another — military, monetary, intellectual, economic, spiritual — has always controlled and directed social destiny, but hitherto it had been exercised by a few men or even by one alone. The mass-man, from the time of the first Pharaoh to that of the last Napoleon, had been the raw, dumb material of social and political creation. There was no way in which he could gain power except for a few brief moments by blind mob-action. Now, like a new dispensation (which it was) Power, immeasurable and unlimited, was his for the taking, and he took it with both hands. Equality of opportunity, like salvation, was free. What the noble or the King could have, he could have in equal measure. In fact he could gain and use it more easily, for acquisition and manipulation towards the end of pecuniary profit required certain gifts of (or deficiency in)

character that came to him by virtue of his nature. Hardness, craft, cupidity, a single-minded determination to have and to hold, if not inherent, had been bred in his bones by the centuries of oppression that had followed the break-up of the free society of the Middle Ages, and now he had his chance. So came the great industrial, mechanical, money-making era of the hundred-and-fifty years from 1775 to 1925. The Power of money and organization took the place of that which hitherto had inhered in land, caste, status, or character. From industry it seeped into society, politics, education — even, of late, into literature, art, and religion, ousting old, age-long ideals, principles, and methods. Sub-man, Neolithic man, was on top and Democracy was in full flower.

II

As there was at least one industrialist, Robert Dale Owen, and two or three patricians like the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, who saw the rank injustice of Nineteenth-Century industrialism, protested against it, and tried (successfully in the case of the noble Earl) to do something about it, so there were a few far-seeing men who envisaged the dangers inherent in

universal suffrage and a regime of Democracy. Carlyle, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, James Fitzjames Stephen, and particularly Sir Henry Maine, raised their varied voices, ranging from the loud roars of Carlyle to the cultivated irony of Arnold and the devastating logic and irrefutable appeal to history of Maine. Indeed the latter predicted with uncanny foresight exactly what would happen (and has happened) if the Liberals and Humanitarians had their way. It all fell on deaf ears, however, and the most the prophets got was a condescending approval of their varied literary styles.

In his salutary book, *The Tyranny of Words*, Stuart Chase has called attention (and quite time, too) to the fact that words have become things, riding us to perdition. This word "Democracy" is a case in point. It is about as ambiguous a term as one could ask, meaning anything the user chooses, from the orgies of a homicidal maniac in the USSR and the Red regime in Spain, to the bureaucracy touched with Messianic vision in the United States. Properly speaking, Democracy is an idea, an aspiration, not an organic scheme of life, either social, political, or in any other sense. I revere the Democracy inherent in the Middle

Ages, and so much as was in the minds and declared in the spoken words of the statesmen of Colonial days and the Framers of the Constitution. This was what I call "High Democracy", but it is gone, and its place taken by "Low Democracy" — a very different thing altogether. Therefore, when I speak in praise of Democracy, I mean the "High" sort, and when I speak in dispraise I mean that of the "Low" sort, which, so far as the official "Democracies" of the world are concerned, and all those phases of social life that are extant today, is about all we have left.

For now there is no real Democracy anywhere, except perhaps in Switzerland and the admirable Scandinavian kingdoms. The three States that still call themselves after this fashion are somewhat unconvincing in their demonstration. England is (or was until lately) a very efficient bureaucracy directed by vested interests in land and finance and industry, stabilized by traditional monarchy, and only occasionally tempered by proletarian displeasure. If this is Democracy, the English have certainly made the best of it. In France they have made the worst. What we have there is very closely what Maine predicted as the last stage of the institution before anarchy arrived.

The French like it that way; but it seems a funny sort of Democracy to engage the sympathy of an intelligent people. It might perhaps be called chaos superinduced by political corruption and enlivened by hysteria.

As for our own country, there was never much Democracy provided for even in the beginning, or ever wanted by the Constitution-makers. Jackson brought it in with a vengeance; he also provided for its nemesis. The Civil War brought mass-man into social and political power, and through industrialism he raised himself to the top and stayed there for more than half a century; the predatory wolf in the deceptive clothing of a sheepish and defunct Democracy. It is too soon, too near onrushing events, to say what we have now; but whatever it is, there are few — except political orators, newspaper editors, and college professors — who would call it Democracy, even as they call the "Loyalist" government in Spain by that ambiguous title. It may be better; I do not know; but to a curious onlooker it seems rather more like what follows after Democracy than Democracy itself. We might call it incipient dictatorship tempered by a smile and periodically obstructed by partisan politicians.

The record of this great Democratic triumvirate, during the last twenty years (to go no further back), is neither wholesome nor stimulating, nor is it such as to redound to the credit of the institution itself, still less to the idea behind it. The characteristic slogan of a generation back, "the cure for Democracy is more Democracy", may be interpreted in a sense that gives it verisimilitude. "The operation was successful, but the patient died." Democracy has killed Democracy. There was something rather fine in the original idea evolved by the Liberals and Humanitarians of the last century, but again it was a case of unintentional infanticide, and the lethal weapon was universal suffrage.

Just as universal suffrage was supposed to perfect Democracy and was "an experiment noble in purpose", so was the very old idea of a Parliament supposed to guard and enforce the liberties of the people. And so it did for a good many centuries. But as an institution it was vulnerable to assault and capture by selfish and sinister interests: and the last few centuries in England, and the last hundred years in the United States, have seen it raped by a very various sequence of libertines. Until about a century ago it was quite different

to our own experience, but latterly the reason for the degeneration and the general discrediting of the parliamentary system (and its abandonment in so many States) is, I maintain, the same. It is the manifestation in the political sphere (through the Liberal and Humanitarian philosophy that issued out of "the Enlightenment" of the previous century) and the assumption and exercise of all power, of the Neolithic type of the human species. In a word, Democracy has made parliamentary government impossible.

Of course it is quite evident that this type, in the mass, does not govern. This type is regimented and used by "the Interests" which are not, as once naïvely held, Big Business and High Finance. They have had their day and the twilight now is upon them. The "Interests" of this generation are of all sorts, from political cabals to every known kind of selfish or fanatical grouping organized for the purpose of getting something—usually for nothing—out of Government. The pressure groups and lobbies that infest Congress, not to speak of the legislatures of the States, are sufficient evidence of this. And the point is that the clever and sometimes devilishly-intelligent leaders, who hold the mass-man in thrall,

are generally by close descent, if not by nativity, of exactly the same stuff as the mass-men themselves; and this is true whether they are captains of industry, princes of high finance, statesmen, labor leaders, or social economists. They are the few of whom I have spoken before, who have seen their chance, taken it, and made the most of it.

Is this thesis valid: the errancy of the theory of progressive evolution, the persistence of the Neolithic type, the everlasting mass-man, and the dominance and control over all things he has accomplished during the last three centuries? There is plenty of support for the major premise in the Greek philosophies, not to speak of the Scriptures. Biologists and anthropologists will smile or sneer at it (if they notice it, which is far from probable) though it is hard to see how historians and philosophers can get away from it. In any case it is a sufficient explanation of the present state of culture and civilization, and I do not know of any other that successfully explains how we got where we are. Technocracy offers a plausible excuse, but the machine does not seem wholly to blame, and there is much good in the machine *per se*. The abandonment of vital, organic religion goes further, and possibly

the two, working together, might do. But still there is the human element to be considered. Why, by and large, does man appear today to be fast approaching an old barbarism, and why is the society he makes and conditions so fast taking on a certain Magdalenian color, or even that of the Old Stone Age? I say it is because of the mass-man, the sub-man, we have always with us; and that Democracy, misunderstood and mishandled, has placed him in control of the destiny of the "civilized" world.

III

Assuming for the sake of argument that this is so, and that a continuance of this state of things means ultimate disaster, what are we going to do about it? I had thought until quite recently that something could be effected through a change in political organization, a return to the original, un-amended Constitution, or better still to the *intent* of the Framers, unaffected by considerations of expediency and compromise — a very different matter.¹ Nowadays events transpire at so many more m.p.h. than ever before in history that a twelve-month

¹ Cf. *The End of Democracy*, by the author. Marshall Jones, Boston.

equals a generation a century ago. I am now by no means so sure. It is not so much concrete details of social or political organization and procedure that we need as a radical change of viewpoint, a new — or rather perhaps, a recovered — philosophy of life.

What I mean is that, again assuming a measure of validity in the ideas that have been stated above, we have got to give up our belief in an automatic *progressive* evolution, and equally that principle by which our overt acts are conditioned — *i.e.*, that all men, at any time and in any place, are by the very fact of their inclusion in the genus of primates, equal, not only before God and the Law, but socially, politically, intellectually, and ethically. And the moral of that is that if we accept this new-old philosophy, we shall proceed to a revision of our methods of social and political organization, substituting in place of our Democracy — now degenerate from its primal ideals, together with its devices of universal suffrage, the party system and parliament — something of a radically different type. And with this will go certain limitations on liberty of speech, of the press, and of free assemblage. I do not mean that these will be imposed by any process of law; this would, if any-

thing, be worse than the present license. Instead, a new standard of personal and social values being established, through the subordination of the Neolithic type and the recovery of self-respect and self-assurance by those who are more completely-developed men and women, public opinion, formed and conditioned by this true *aristoi*, will become a powerful censor, and little by little the social and cultural offenses, now so prevalent, may cease in a measure to exist, or at least maintain themselves only in proportion to the numerical weight of the class of sub-men.

Putting it bluntly, what this means is that we are where we are because we lack a true aristocracy. This is a fighting word with the mass-man, but it is sound Jeffersonian doctrine. In that illuminating correspondence between Jefferson and Adams in the last years of their lives, which were geographically sundered but increasingly united, mentally and spiritually, through age and experience, Jefferson wrote:

I agree with you that there is a natural aristocracy among men. . . . The natural aristocracy I consider the most precious gift of nature for the instruction, the trusts and the government of society. . . . May we not say that that form of government is the best which provides the most effectively for a pure election of these

natural aristocrats into the offices of government.

Further, he stated that the basic qualifications for the members of this "natural aristocracy" were "birth, worth, and talents".

Some form of this aristocracy has always conditioned good living and a good society, and I think it is the only possible corrective of that "unchecked Democracy" that Jefferson held to be "the most ignoble, unjust and detestable form of government". And the same thing holds in the case of those other categories of life beyond the political sphere. Liberalism, the release and free gift of Power, together with the prevalence of evolutionary and Democratic theory have not only excluded "natural aristocracy" from the entire social scene, but have also substituted a false and vicious aristocracy in its place. The true aristocracy of "birth, worth, and talents" stands for "certain virtues, integrities, and decencies which are purely extralegal and which also lie largely outside the scope of formal ethics".

We had this "natural aristocracy" once. It was found amongst the merchants and maritime "adventurers"; the squires and scholars of New England; the landed families of New York; the planters and statesmen of the South.

They have abdicated their authority and surrendered their prestige—or rather they have been black-jacked and robbed of their heritage. Worse than their tacit acceptance of this demotion, they have very generally accepted the social and cultural standards set up by the new mass-man aristocracy and are submerged indistinguishably in the Neolithic ruck. Yet, like the poor whites and the hillbillies of the Southern mountains, the good blood is there and a sound inheritance, latent, perhaps, but indestructible. It is possible that some impulse from unpredictable sources may waken a dormant conscience and latent energy to creative activity again.

As I have already said, most of our contemporary "aristocrats" stem from the class of mass-men; they have gained their position through the release and free gift of Power; they maintain this position through the manipulation of the same enginery; they are governed by mass-man standards of value; and they act according to type. This way lies social declension and possible social dissolution. It has happened before, and there is no reason to suppose (giving the phrase a somewhat different emphasis and interpretation) "it can't happen here".

Again, as I have said, there is little we can do about it through formal political action. It is more a personal and social problem; but it might help a little if we could get rid of the "one man, one vote" superstition, the irrational and toxic device of universal suffrage, and find some workable substitute for *political* parliamentary government that the true principles of Democracy, misunderstood and misapplied, have rendered both futile and destructive.

I do not know how the Neolithic type is to be restrained in its activities and relegated to the position justified by its qualifications, nor do I know how Thomas Jefferson's ideal aristocracy is to be recovered and energized to action. Communism aims, and with growing success, to give to mass-man full power over all things, while the saving remnant of a true aristocracy has simply abdicated all authority and pretty generally accepted the Neolithic standards of value. Strong leadership might do it, but today this is confined to the proletarian element or is of that Fascist-Nazi type we here in America find, justly, both antipathetic and unpromising. Vital and creative aristocracy does not come either way. It may be that "the

readiness is all", and if enough people become conscious of the need we may experience a real case of wish-fulfillment.

If this should come to pass, we may again see a measure of dignity and statesmanship return to our class of public officials. The Governors of the several States, and the legislative bodies, from Washington downward, may acquire something of the same dignity while in some degree substituting a wide wisdom and a true patriotism for personal interest and partisan politics under the aegis of pressure groups and job-holders, so restoring the parliamentary system to a position of honor and efficiency. Capitalism, industry, finance, and labor, under the influence of a new spirit of honor, justice, generosity, and magnanimity may each and all be saved from the fate they have blindly fixed for themselves, regaining both self-respect and the respect of the public. Society may again be conditioned by the Jeffersonian principles of "birth, worth, and talents", and civilization, reorientated by character and culture, may avoid catastrophe.

But all these things cannot happen so long as the Neolithic type of man retains his full control of the destiny of this planet.

DON'T SEND YOUR BOY TO PREP SCHOOL

BY LEW MORRIS

COME September, several thousand citizens go through the annual ritual of packing Junior's trunk, kissing him a fond good-bye, and sending him off to spend the next eight months in the most useless institutions in these United States—the fashionable preparatory school.

Junior, aged anywhere from fourteen to eighteen, is expected by his parents to absorb culture, discipline, manners, manliness, sportsmanship, integrity, and numberless other virtues at his school. But between this lovely illusion and the actual reality there is ample room to horsewhip all the headmasters in the country. For Junior will absorb instead a loathing for learning, a horror of discipline, a scorn for religion, and a perverted notion of sex—all for \$6000 for four years. This fee also includes the systematic elimination of whatever talent, ingenuity, or ambition he was encumbered with on delivery. Naturally there are notable exceptions to this generalization, but not many. I speak of

the vast majority of our high-toned preparatory schools.

Perhaps parents can be excused for their high expectations. Their boys supposedly represent the top-cream of American youth, carefully nurtured in an atmosphere of culture and refinement. And in order to be admitted to these prep schools, they must be considerably more intelligent than the average high-school Senior. After reading of the school's outstanding scholastic reputation in the catalogue supplied for the purpose, parents naturally expect that their sons will straightway be molded into the Leaders of Tomorrow.

Admitting that the boys entering preparatory schools are potential Great Men, one is forced to conclude that their potentialities evaporate rapidly. Three years ago a writer in *Fortune* examined the records of twelve leading schools, and reported that they had contributed a grand total of twenty-seven Senators, one Supreme Court Justice, and (alas!) one President, out of a total of 67,000 graduates.

In summarizing his impressions he concluded:

By and large, and with only qualified exceptions, the fashionable preparatory school has done next to nothing to justify its existence.

Stunned and horrified, the educators of our young blue-bloods attempted to refute this charge, but confined their howling to the unfairness of only one comparison drawn—between the public-service records of English and American schools. Disregarding any comparative figures, to quiet the caviling pedants, I offer a few statistics that may prove more difficult to explain away.

Of the 19,000 graduates of these eminent institutions now between the ages of thirty-five and sixty, exactly seven have achieved recognition as writers of one sort or another. Of the same 19,000, two are notable in the field of music. I have been unable to uncover a single one who has distinguished himself as a Captain of Industry—but one did make the grade as a big-league ball-player. Among the many hundreds of modern American scientists, explorers, authors, statesmen, inventors, surgeons, musicians, lawyers, and educators listed in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the stupendous total of four are products of our exclusive

preparatory schools. Further, 42 per cent of the student body at a prominent Eastern university comes from twelve noted prep schools: but only 15.8 per cent of the University's Phi Beta Kappa membership comes from this 42 per cent.

What happens to the prep-school product after college is difficult to say. Junior is almost certain to remain, after a short obituary in the society page following his marriage to a post-debutante, in murky oblivion for the rest of his life. A scant handful of his classmates achieve some measure of success in law, medicine, or banking. The rest of them land jobs through influential relatives and drift through life aimlessly.

All in all, the prep-school boy's chances of making something of himself would seem to be considerably smaller than the bootblack's. Indeed, it might even be said that the failure of our prep schools has done much to solidify the Horatio Alger tradition in America. "There's always room at the top", because the men who logically belong there are elsewhere. To understand their failure, one has only to examine prep-school life itself.

The prep school is the perfect totalitarian state in miniature. A

week of life in one would convince you that the pedagogues are frantically training boys to live under a dictatorship, which they may or may not anticipate in the near future. You will find a dictator and his band of underlings; a specious parliament and a gagged press; secret agents, mandatory mass meetings, sanctimonious sermons, and jingoistic speeches in which the interests of the State are forever stressed.

The headmaster, or *Führer*, often displays a versatility that puts Herr Hitler to shame. He is at once scholar, glad-hander, pietist, politician, social charmer, and overbearing autocrat; suave with society mothers, diplomatic with enraged fathers, unctuous with wealthy philanthropists, learned with his colleagues, and terrifying with school criminals. To assist him in his elevating duties, he has a miscellaneous collection of hirelings at his command in the persons of faculty members. These pedagogues not only mete out culture, but also serve the State in the interests of Law and Order. As detective, the master reports offenders to his colleagues, who serve as jurymen; as sole witness, he verifies the evidence; as prosecuting attorney, he litigates for the State. Since questioning evidence

or defendants would be an affront to the reporting master, his colleagues presume that he is guilty automatically.

The press, that pestiferous problem of all dictatorships, is handled in the orthodox manner — a “Faculty Adviser” is designated to gag the school paper. He sees to it that no embarrassing news stories or crusading editorials are slipped in by a credulous editor who has heard of the Freedom of the Press in American History class. Editors who value their positions usually find that it pays to play ball with the administration, and the result approximates this arresting editorial, selected at random from a prep-school publication:

We have all been told from the pulpit and the platform the necessity of unity and how its lack breeds the seeds of dissent. By the word unity, however, one should not confine oneself merely to the picture of an individual engaging actively in furthering the best interests of the school and himself. One should understand . . . that the definition of unity includes the suppression of any inconsistencies of conduct by the spirit of complete understanding and cooperation on the part of the individual concerned.

Editorials are frequently transcribed orations of the *Führer*, which is not an altogether strange coincidence. And at least one school paper is edited by the headmaster himself.

Another publication designed to keep students in the groove is the rule-book. At one school, for example, it is a pugnacious, sixteen-page pamphlet called *The Brown Book*, containing some sixty-odd laws of the State. If you are caught making a sortie down the hall after "lights", the master will solemnly refer you to Section III, Rule Seven, Article Seven: "Under no circumstances may a student leave his room after the lights go out at 10 P.M." Subsequently, you will be reported to the faculty and notified that you have received an "Official Warning". After three such the *Führer* will announce before the assembled school that you are "sequestered"—which means put into solitary confinement.

The prep school, however, is more than an ordinary, run-of-the-mill dictatorship. It is a perfect Planned Society. A significant discovery made by experimenting psychologists some years ago has been put to practical use here. For several weeks, the psychologists rang a bell before feeding a dog his daily meal; when, in time, they rang the bell without feeding him, they found that the sound of the bell had made the dog's mouth water. Impressed by this discovery in conditioned reflexes, prep-school administrators installed

electric bells, and these literally run the schools. They ring when it is time to arise, retire, eat, attend classes, assemblies, study periods, exercise periods, recesses, chapel services, and so on. Since the prep-schooler is somewhat more intelligent than the dog, his reflexes are, happily, more complex. After a month or so, each bell produces the desired reaction at the right time, and the student is thus relieved of the discomfort of thinking about what he must do next. This, as any dictator knows, is highly desirable.

But the bell system never completely supplants the prep-schooler's cerebrum. Ennui descends upon him. The days are as alike as pins, and his brain grows restless from sheer inactivity. This results in the only voluntary and purely-spontaneous activity in prep-school life, an activity which shows the true nature of the "school spirit" lovingly referred to by headmasters and parents. It is that informal gathering known as the "Bull Session". Here at last we find the young gentlemen gathered to exchange stimulating thoughts of their own. But there is only one topic of discussion—sex. Dirty jokes and stories are exchanged, filthy allusions are made about the masters and their wives, smutty magazines

perused. And of course sadism, homosexuality, and autoerotism have their day.

While this mental stagnation can be blamed on the rigors of dictatorship, and also upon the intolerable monotony of a perfectly-planned society, it must be attributed in part to the complete lack of intellectual stimulation. Classes are so dull that any boy showing interest in them is correctly considered a "queerie". For the single scholastic aim of the fashionable prep is to build a reputation based on College Entrance Examination results.

Instructors know that their positions depend on the records their students make on these examinations; and they know, from previous years, the exact material required, which is limited but specific. In history, a mass of names and dates must be drummed into the student's head; in Latin, certain irregular verb forms and declensions; in geometry, a number of theorems; and so on. Parrot-learning is used almost ex-

clusively to pummel these dry facts into the memory, and the intellectual stagnation pervading classroom and campus is more stifling than a Victorian linen-closet. As if to prove this, a young instructor recently assigned daily essays of a few hundred words, to be written on any subject the student could think of. After three days most of the students had completely exhausted their imaginations; after five, even the so-called brightest were stumped.

By the end of his Senior year, Junior is eighteen years old and about ready to lie down and die. His mind is filled with the names, dates, laws, theorems, verb-forms, and dirty stories that have been battered into it by constant repetition. But his thinking power is completely undeveloped. If he has any ambition left it is to place a large bomb under the school and blow it to Kingdom Come.

And so, if you would give your son a fighting chance, send him to the local high school. Better yet, educate him yourself.



THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

BY H. L. MENCKEN

*An appraisal of the dispute between the ACLU and THE MERCURY;
with a letter in comment from the Union.*

IN THE AMERICAN MERCURY for December, 1936, there was an article by Harold Lord Varney entitled "The American Civil Liberties Union" with the sub-title "Liberalism à la Moscow". The general thesis thereof was that the Union, in recent years, has shown, at times, a certain partiality in its operations. The nature of that partiality was indicated in the first paragraph, which alleged, on grounds subsequently adduced and relied upon, that the Union is "the organization which is doing the most fruitful work to advance the so-called Class War in America today".

The officers of the Union objected to this, and the ensuing controversy was handed over to the legal advisers of both sides. Having heard last December (a year after the article was printed) that these gentlemen had so far failed to effect a composition, I took the

liberty of suggesting, as a friend to both parties, that the principals have a meeting and try to resolve their differences. This meeting was held in the office of Arthur Garfield Hays, counsel for the Union, on December 28. Present: Mr. Hays, Roger N. Baldwin (director of the Union), Paul Palmer (editor of THE AMERICAN MERCURY), and myself.

The discussion was amicable, and all hands adopted my suggestion that the conflicting contentions be submitted to some friendly but disinterested person, of sober years and notorious virtue, for examination. After various other candidates for that office had been discussed, the high contracting parties, to my considerable surprise and disquiet, proposed that I take it myself. My qualifications from the standpoint of the Union, appeared to be that I had supported its battles for the Bill of Rights

since its organization, and had been closely associated with Mr. Hays in various other enterprises to that end. On the side of THE AMERICAN MERCURY I came in as its first editor, and hence a person naturally interested in its doings and fortunes.

But I have had no voice in the conduct of the magazine since January 1, 1934, do not own any stock in it, appear in it only rarely and as an ordinary contributor, and dissent in more than one way from its present program. I am not acquainted with Mr. Varney. As for the Union, I am not now and have never been a member of it, and have never solicited or accepted its aid in any of the defenses of free speech that I have had a hand in—for example, the “Hat-rack” case of 1926, in which Mr. Hays appeared as my counsel, but not as counsel for the Union.

Mr. Palmer elected to stand on the evidence presented in Mr. Varney’s article, and the Union undertook to prepare an answer to it. That answer was handed to me on March 16 by Miss Lucille B. Milner, secretary of the Union. It includes a detailed analysis of the article, page by page, and a mass of accompanying documents, mainly pamphlets and press-releases published by the Union dur-

ing the past few years. I have examined all these papers with care, and read Mr. Varney’s article. My conclusions are as follows:

There are two questions to be considered: (a) whether all of the allegations of fact made by Mr. Varney are given adequate support by the record, and (b) whether there is enough other evidence in the record to justify an unfriendly critic (allowing something for the heat of controversy) to challenge the Union’s impartiality in any case or class of cases. My answer to the first question is no. My answer to the second must be yes.

II

I believe that Mr. Varney falls into both an exaggeration and an irrelevance in his very first paragraph, when he says that the Union “is doing the most fruitful work to advance the so-called Class War in America today”, and that “it is doubtful if, without [it], there would exist a Red problem in the Republic in anything approaching its present seriousness”. That the Union, by fighting for free speech for so-called Reds, has facilitated their dissemination of their doctrines is too obvious to need statement, but it does not fol-

low that it should be held responsible for the nature of those doctrines, or for their effect. If it were so responsible, then it would be equally responsible for the doctrines preached by other unpopular groups that it has defended, for example, the sect called Jehovah's Witnesses. In defending the right of Jehovah's Witnesses to preach and practice their bizarre theology, the Union has undoubtedly furthered it, but it would be absurd to argue that it has thereby subscribed to it, or favored it more than it favors any other theology.

This incidental furthering of strange and suspected ideas is an essential concomitant of the right to free speech, and cannot be escaped by those who advocate and defend that right. The guarantees of the Bill of Rights are unconditional. They do not apply to one class of men alone; they apply to all men equally, including the vast party of fools. It was the apparent notion of the Fathers that whatever evil would flow out of fools being permitted to speak their minds freely would be more than counterbalanced by good, and they deliberately risked the former in order to get the latter. The same notion is implicit in every effort, by whomsoever made, to prevent invasions of the First Amendment,

whether by official agencies or private persons. It is always the fools who need the most help.

The Reds are admittedly not creatures of the Union. They exist in any given case prior to its intervention in their affairs, and I see no ground for believing that it commonly intervenes, or indeed has ever intervened, until their rights under the First Amendment have been formally threatened. It may be that it is deceived on occasion by false reports of such threatening, for Reds, as a class, are not above resorting to chicane, but such deceits must be relatively rare, and their occurrence, if they actually occur, must be laid to the great natural law that the practice of public spirit carries a certain inescapable risk of being made a sucker.

In the normal case the Union appears to withhold action until it has sufficient evidence that one of the guarantees of the First Amendment is actually threatened. It may be that it horns in with greater alacrity than would be shown by some other agency, but that fact seems to me to be only natural, for it was organized for the express purpose of hornning in with special alacrity. Moreover, something must be allowed for its wide and tumultuous experience, which nec-

essarily gives it a high capacity for detecting invasions of the Bill of Rights in what may be called their larval stage, when they appear to the untutored eye to be only measures to secure the public peace.

As for the charge that the Union has counseled labor agitators and other professional nuisances to use guile in maintaining their rights, and even encouraging them, on occasion, to violate the laws, I can see nothing in it to complain of seriously. It may have been imprudent, but it was hardly anything more. Here, again, the Union's experience must be allowed to direct its actions. It has learned all the tricks that enemies of free speech employ in their art, and it has naturally invented some tricks of its own to circumvent them. There is no evidence, so far as I know, that it has ever staged a riot in a place where free speech commonly prevails. All its enterprises in that direction, if any may be charged to it, have been carried on in communities where a little healthy sedition probably has a salubrious effect. A citizen menaced in his rights by the cops is not bound to wait until they club him; he may also challenge them when they merely menace him.

The Union never goes into court arguing that the Marxian gospel is

true; it simply argues that the persons who subscribe to it have a right to preach it. Similarly, it did not, in the Sacco-Vanzetti case, maintain that the crime laid to the two men was virtuous; it only maintained that they were accused on insufficient evidence. This distinction, when a dispute between angry men runs high, and both sides resort to demagoguery, is sometimes vague and hard to see, but I believe that it remains a distinction nevertheless.

In the matter of Communism this distortion must be very real to some of the members of the Union's national committee, else it would be impossible to imagine them continuing to lend the Union their names. Glancing through the list, I find at least three gentlemen who have been denounced by the official Communist organs, within the past few months, as enemies of the Class War and fiends in human form, to wit, Oswald Garrison Villard, John Dewey, and John Dos Passos. Proceeding further, I encounter the names of Judge George W. Anderson, Dr. Edwin M. Borchard, and Dr. Mary E. Woolley, all of whom, it seems reasonable to assume, are in no more danger of succumbing to the Marxian theology than they are of submitting to baptism by

Jehovah's Witnesses. And there are yet others.

III

But there remains an important part of Mr. Varney's case, part of it allegation of fact, and the other part inference. The allegation is that, whatever may be the official purpose and program of the Union as a whole, some of its most important and active officers incline in their sympathies toward the so-called Left, and have indicated that leaning on various occasions. The inference is that this fact, if it be a fact, is enough to set up a plausible doubt of the impartiality of the organization, and to influence, under easily imaginable circumstances, its actual operations. It is my finding that the allegation is supported by the record, and my belief that the inference, though it may not be compelling, is nevertheless reasonable.

I do not doubt for an instant, of course, the *bona fides* of the officers in question. But I believe that Mr. Varney is justified in arguing that their participation in partisan controversy is incompatible with an appearance of complete impartiality, and that it inevitably throws doubts upon the impartiality of the Union itself. The organization oc-

cupies a sort of quasi-judicial position. It is pledged to further free speech, regardless of the cause that free speech may serve. It is certain to get into difficulties the moment any responsible officer offers public aid and comfort to one such cause against another, or adheres, however gingerly, to a cause that rejects free speech altogether.

The case of Roger N. Baldwin, the director, naturally comes first. The Union, in its reply to Mr. Varney, argues that "Mr. Baldwin's personal views on economics and politics have nothing to do with the Union's program", and that he is only "the agent of the board in carrying out its decisions, and has only the influence in the board or in the Union of a paid executive who carries out group decisions". All this seems to me to be far from convincing. No one familiar with the conduct of such organizations will believe that Mr. Baldwin is the mere lackey of the board. In the very nature of the case he must be one of its chief sources of information, and hence one of the chief agents in the framing of its judgments. He is a man of great energy, notable courage, strong convictions, and engaging personality, and of large and special information in the field wherein he and the board jointly oper-

ate. The board can be imagined as refusing to give his counsel polite consideration only on the theory that it distrusts him, which is an absurdity. He may influence it without opening his mouth in argument. However fair he may try to be—and I believe that his fairness runs far beyond the common—his very statement of the case before it must be colored inevitably by his private convictions.

It thus becomes relevant to examine such of those convictions as have become publicly known. I find that, as a fact, he has sought on at least one occasion to set up a distinction between violations of civil liberties in this country and their violation in Russia. His argument is that here such acts "are violations of professed and constitutional guarantees", whereas in Russia they are "weapons of struggle in a transition period of Socialism". He is not, I believe, a Communist, but it must be plain that he here repeats with approval a classical Communist argument, and that it is not only extremely unpersuasive, but in direct conflict with the principles on which the Union was founded.

I simply can't imagine any thorough-going friend of civil liberties acquiescing in it. If the bosses of Russia are free to suspend

or abolish the common liberties of mankind in order to attain some chosen political end, then the bosses of the United States are free to do the same thing to attain some other end. In brief, liberty becomes a mere gift from above, to be granted or withheld at will by the current repositories of power, and a Hague is as free to destroy it as a Stalin.

Certainly the Union does not stand on any such platform. If it is pledged to anything at all, it is pledged to the doctrine that civil rights are fundamental in civilized society, and irrevocable by any legal process. This was the doctrine that Mr. Baldwin entertained when he went to jail during the World War, and it is the doctrine that the Union must fight for today.

The rejoinder to Mr. Varney argues that "what Mr. Baldwin has had to say about Soviet Russia . . . is within his rights as a citizen". Admitted. No one, as far as I know, denies it. But he is not under discussion as a citizen; he is considered here, as he was considered in Mr. Varney's article, as the agent of the Union, and its spokesman. In that character, it seems to me, he cannot argue for civil liberties with one breath, and condone their suspension with the

next. If he actually believes that suspending them is justifiable in Russia, then his defense of them in this country becomes to that extent diluted and enfeebled, and a fair man may reasonably question his essential devotion to them, and along with it the devotion of the Union that he serves and represents. And if he simply indulged himself in inconsidered talk, motivated by speculation rather than by conviction, then the Union must suffer no less, just as Holy Church would suffer if the Cardinals around the Throne of St. Peter began to debate in public the theology of Islam or the Foot-Wash Baptists.

My commission does not oblige me to offer what are called constructive suggestions, for it is recognized, I suppose, that I have no gift for them, but I can't help hinting that there is a better way of getting rid of the suspicions entertained by Mr. Varney (and, as I gather, by many other persons) than by resorting to casuistry. Mr. Baldwin has the remedy in his own hands. It is perfectly possible to think of his unhappy condonation of the Communist war upon civil liberties as a mere transient aberration, born of a brief visit to the Moscow Zion. He has on other occasions denounced some of the

effects of that war, and in plain terms. His career at home justifies the belief that he is in favor of civil liberties *in themselves*, as essential to the primary dignities of man. Let him say so in a clarion voice, with no ifs or buts in favor of the Hagues of Russia, and the whole matter may be conveniently forgotten.

The case of Dr. Harry F. Ward, chairman of the Union, is analogous, but more difficult. The reply to Mr. Varney makes much of the fact that Mr. Baldwin "has no political or economic connections and is engaged in no public activities conflicting with his duties to the Union", but on the very same page it is categorically admitted that the League Against War and Fascism (now the League for Peace and Democracy), of which Dr. Ward is likewise the chairman, is an agency "in which Communists are active". This last is a frank admission of a notorious fact, and certainly does not run to understatement. The League's recent change of name was widely interpreted as an effort to get rid of a reputation for partiality, not to say dissimulation. It seems to me that, in the circumstances, his retention of both offices was, and is, confusing and imprudent, and that he cannot complain if it has raised doubts

about the judicial impartiality of the Union.

It is not necessary to prove that he shares the ideas of his associates in the League; it is enough to show that he must be aware of them, and has done nothing publicly to dissociate himself from them. His position as chairman of the Union makes his associations a public matter, as the associations of Mr. Baldwin are a public matter. He cannot, any more than Mr. Baldwin, be a defender of civil liberties on one side and a willing consorter with persons who deny all civil liberties to their opponents on the other. So long as the two chief officers of the Union permit themselves that dichotomy, or anything resembling it in the eye of a reasonable man, they can't complain if the organization they serve is beset with criticism.

The Union is an agency relying for support upon the general confidence, and it must submit to judgment by ordinary public opinion. Its chief stock in trade, and the main gauge of its usefulness, is the common reliance upon its unqualified devotion to its declared purposes. Its officers, without question, have a right to entertain any private opinions they incline to, but to the extent that those opinions appear to be in material con-

flict with its purposes, it is certainly not surprising to find the Union itself challenged. It would be challenged in the same way if Baldwin undertook to frame an apologia, however academic, for violations of the Bill of Rights by the American Legion or the Ku Klux Klan, or if Ward began to associate himself publicly with Catholics who hold in conscience that birth control should be put down by law. In such matters, doubts are easily set afloat, and may do great damage. In the present case, it seems to me, the way to still them is not to dismiss them as irrational or to denounce them as immoral, but to remove any possible excuse for them. That excuse will remain so long as officers of the Union are publicly associated with persons whose belief in civil rights, if it exists at all, is undeniably too narrow to take in the rights of those who differ from them in politics. Nothing will be achieved by arguing that that association is irrelevant and immaterial.

IV

I close with a reiteration of my confidence in the public usefulness of the Union, and in the honest desire of its officers to serve it faith-

fully. I am sorry indeed that doubts about either should have been raised at this time, with free speech under heavy fire by Communists, Fascists, Nazis, New Dealers, and various sects of Christians alike, and many of its ostensible friends wavering. The public services of the Union in the Mooney case, the Sacco-Vanzetti case, the Puerto Rico case, the Jennings case, and the Scopes case, to name only a salient few, surely need no defense by me. It has done more than any other agency, whether official or non-official, to preserve the common liberties of the citizens of this country.

Naturally enough, it has provoked criticism, and some of that criticism—though certainly not all—has been partisan and unfair. When such attacks expose weak-

nesses in its position those weaknesses should be rectified as quickly as possible, lest they do irreparable damage. In the present case I see nothing unreasonable in asking the principal officers of the Union to clarify their position upon the principles for which the Union fundamentally stands. If, in fact, they, or any one of them, admit doubts about the universal validity of the ordinary civil rights, then I think they should, in fairness to the organization, retire from office in it. If, on the contrary, they have been misunderstood, or their doubts have been allayed and abandoned, then a comprehensive statement to that effect will be accepted by every reasonable man, and the whole unhappy difficulty will be at an end.

A LETTER FROM THE ACLU

Dear Mr. Mencken:

The Board of Directors of the American Civil Liberties Union appreciates your findings that Mr. Varney's factual charges against us are not supported by the evidence. We can only regret that you did not dispose more fully of his grotesque perversion of our record as impartial defenders of civil rights.

You give us entire credit for sincerity. Mr. Varney gives us none. You have thus disposed completely of his main charge that we are the knowing dupes of "Moscow".

Despite the fact that you give us a verdict on the record you more or less justify the erroneous impression that the Union is somehow committed to promoting

Radicalism and ignores the defense of the rights of others. In doing so you take what seems to us the amazing position that defenders of civil liberties cannot co-operate or consort with those who do not accept 100 per cent defense of civil rights for all.

You will concede, we think, that the Civil Liberties Union should be judged not by the personal views or associations of its officers but by its record. We challenge anyone to point out in our twenty years of effort where we have failed to meet any important issue of civil liberty that has arisen, regardless of whom it concerned. That we have more often defended the rights of labor and Radicals is due solely to the fact they are more often attacked. But we have spoken up quite as vigorously, when infrequent occasion demanded, for the rights of those not associated with the labor or Radical movements — notably in connection with the attacks on the Ku Klux Klan's right to assemble in the North; similar attacks on the rights of German-American Nazis; and in the case of a Senate committee's unjustified procurement of telegrams from a telegraph company and income tax returns from the Treasury Department. A large part of our work has not con-

cerned the "Left" at all. It has dealt with freedom in our schools and colleges, with religious liberty, with censorship of the radio, press, books, and movies. You give us credit for a fair record, but you obscure it by an assumption that our fairness is somehow compromised by the personal views and associations of some of our officers.

You even go to the length of suggesting that our officers could not in good conscience associate with Catholics opposed to the dissemination of birth-control literature and still be consistent. You apply the same reasoning to the association with Communists and presumably others who recognize some limitations on their own advocacy of civil liberty. If this line of reasoning were followed out, we would have to defend civil liberties almost in a vacuum; certainly in an ivory tower of purity, impossible of practical achievement.

We co-operate in defense of constitutional guarantees with Catholics as we do with Communists or any others who go along on the major issues of civil rights. We have, and have had, Catholics on our National and other committees. We even have on our Board of Directors one member of the Communist Party, indeed one of the Union's incorporators, who did

not happen to become a member of the Communist Party until a year or two ago. We make no political, religious, or racial distinctions in our membership or in our boards. Any other position would violate the tolerance for which we stand and limit the forces available for defense of civil rights.

You ascribe to Mr. Baldwin as director a dominating influence on the Board. Let us dismiss at once the notion that Mr. Baldwin's personal views or attitudes outside our platform influence the work of the Union. That assumption might be valid with many organizations, but ours is exceptional in having a Board of Directors of thirty-three members, meeting weekly throughout the year and handling every issue with which the Union deals. In cases of policy or differences of opinion a National Committee of almost eighty persons all over the country votes by mail. Most of the Union's public work is carried on by lawyers. Mr. Baldwin, as the executive, carries out the policies and decisions of the Board and the National Committee.

As to Mr. Baldwin's personal views on Soviet Russia which you think compromise his position in the United States, we quote his position as he states it:

"Mr. Mencken has wholly confused what I have had to say in favor of the economic experiment in Russia with condonation of its dictatorship. I need not discuss the relative merits of economic and civil liberties. I need only point out that I have on many occasions spoken up against political persecution in the Soviet Union as I have against it in other lands. In 1924 as chairman of the International Committee for Political Prisoners I was responsible for the publication of a book, *Letters from Russian Prison*, highly critical of political persecution. My views are fully set forth in my book *Liberty Under the Soviets*, published in 1928. In the introduction to it I said:

I recognize fully the danger in extreme measures of control in effect in Russia today. I deplore them for their unnecessary cruelties; even more for their threat to the development of the popular forces which the Communists themselves profess to encourage. As for the future, no system seems to me permanently tolerable without unrestricted civil liberty as a means toward its continuing growth.

I hold precisely the same views today. Nothing in them compromises my defense of civil liberties in the United States. The Civil Liberties Union as such has no concern with issues in foreign countries."

Your characterization of the associations of Dr. Ward in another organization is fully met by the views we have already expressed concerning the associations of our officers and Board members. Since Dr. Ward has been Chairman and Mr. Baldwin Director during the entire life of the Union, it is obvious that we could not have the record with which you credit us if your assumption were true that the personal views and associations you ascribe to them colored our activities.

We submit that even if the un-

thinking confuse the personal views of some of the officers with the Union's official position, it offers no justification for approval by a man like yourself who has examined the facts. Indeed, a hostile critic on the radical side could make out just as good a case by using your implications to show that the Civil Liberties Union is hopelessly tied up with the economic *status quo* because of the personal associations and views of the more conservative members of our Board.

Sincerely yours,

DOROTHY D. BROMLEY
CARL CARMER
MARGARET DESILVER
JOHN F. FINERTY
OSMOND K. FRAENKEL

WALTER FRANK
ARTHUR GARFIELD HAYS
JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
CHARLES H. HOUSTON
B. W. HUEBSCH
DOROTHY KENYON

CORLISS LAMONT
ELIOT D. PRATT
WM. B. SPOFFORD
NORMAN THOMAS
RAYMOND L. WISE



*(Editor's Note — A letter from Mr. Varney to Mr. Mencken
appears in the Open Forum.)*

THE TRUTH ABOUT AARON BURR

BY NATHAN SCHACHNER

ASK the university-graduate-in-the-street what he knows of Aaron Burr, and he will tell you that: (1) Aaron Burr intrigued with the Federalists to wrest the Presidency from the great and noble Thomas Jefferson; (2) Aaron Burr murdered the great and noble Alexander Hamilton in cold blood; (3) Aaron Burr betrayed his country and managed to escape the halter that he richly deserved; (4) Aaron Burr seduced every woman he met.

This is usually the sum total of the educated American's knowledge of the subject. But he is hardly to blame: every textbook, from the jejune performances that are dished out as history in the elementary schools to the more voluminous affairs used in the colleges, repeats the well-worn theme. Burr was a traitor; Burr was a master of intrigue; Burr was a man of selfish and restless ambition; Burr was without honor or morals; Burr was unprincipled. These are the phrases, the very turns of expression, that are parroted over and

over again. The question is — are they true?

They are not true — though they have passed for more than a century as current coin of the realm. What manner of man, then, was the real Aaron Burr? Wherein does he differ from the distorted caricatures of the textbooks? What are the true facts concerning his career, as the contemporary documents show them?

I intend to take up each of these accusations in order, submit to you the pontifications of the historians concerning them, place in evidence the proof of their falsity, and let you, a jury of his peers, bring in the final verdict on the guilt or innocence of Aaron Burr.

Charge No. 1: Aaron Burr intrigued with the Federalists to wrest the Presidency from the great and noble Jefferson.

On this the textbook writers are unanimous. Burr was guilty as charged. Writes Professor Muzey:

Had Burr been an honorable man, he would have immediately acquiesced

(in Jefferson's election). But Burr was not an honorable man. Ambition led him to contest the election in the House and to lower his dignity by accepting the support of the Federalists, who used him only that they might defeat Jefferson.¹

Declares Professor Purcell:

The Federalists no doubt had an understanding with Burr. . . . Hamilton appeared at his best. He thought only of the national welfare. An avowed enemy of Jefferson, he urged Federalists to join Republican members and elect Jefferson rather than Burr, whom he knew to be unmoral and politically corrupt.²

States Professor Shortridge:

Burr attempted to have himself elected President by the aid of Federalist votes. In spite of the fact that Hamilton was the bitter political enemy of Jefferson, he recognized that Jefferson was "neither depraved nor desperate" as he believed Burr to be.³

A damning indictment, if we are to believe these historians — and they are among the most eminent in the land. Unfortunately their conclusions, to say nothing of their phraseology, are taken second-hand, each from the other, to form a veritable chain of calumny. The facts do not substantiate them.

The Republicans had won the

election of 1800, largely through the skilful tactics of Aaron Burr. But the final result was a tie between Jefferson and Burr. Under the peculiar system of the time, the electors voted for two candidates, without any discrimination between them. The candidate with the greatest number of votes became President; the next in line Vice-President. So that, though everyone knew it had been the intention of the electors to prefer Jefferson for the Presidency, the election was thrown into the House of Representatives for a decision. The Federalists, who controlled the House, saw a chance to create a stalemate from which they might extract profit. The Republicans would vote for Jefferson; *they* would support Burr.

Aaron Burr was in Albany, hundreds of miles away, and a full week's journey by coach. The State Constitutional Convention, of which he was Chairman, was in session; and he was busy with the wedding of his famous daughter, Theodosia. Immediately on hearing of the tie, however, he wrote an open letter to General Smith, one of Jefferson's closest friends in Congress. He said:

Every man who knows me ought to know that I would utterly disclaim all competition (with Jefferson) . . . As

¹ *The United States of America*, by Davis S. Muzzey. Ginn and Co. Vol. I. Page 200.

² *The American Nation*, by Richard J. Purcell. Ginn and Co. Page 293.

³ *The Development of the United States*, by Wilson P. Shortridge. Macmillan. Page 242.

to my friends, they would dishonor my views and insult my feelings by a suspicion that I would submit to be instrumental in counteracting the wishes and expectations of the United States. And I now constitute you my proxy to declare these sentiments, if the occasion should arise.

Congressman Smith hastened to broadcast this disavowal.

Jefferson himself declared to his daughter: The Federalists were confident at first they could debauch Col. Burr. . . . *His conduct has been honorable and decisive, and greatly embarrasses them.* Only later — two years later, to be exact — when Jefferson had decided to crush Burr as a threat to the aspiration of his Virginia Dynasty, did he find it politically expedient to pretend a retroactive belief in Burr's treachery.

Albert Gallatin, Jefferson's campaign manager, reported:

A more considerable number (of Federalists) will try actually to make Burr President. He has *sincerely* opposed the design, and will go *any lengths* to prevent its execution.

The Federalists had sent David Ogden as their emissary to make a deal with Burr. He wrote back in disgust that Burr refused to entertain any terms whatsoever. William Cooper, Federalist Congressman from New York, asserted at the very peak of the weary balloting: *Had Burr done anything for*

himself, he would long ere this have been president.

The clincher, however, is furnished by Bayard of Delaware, leader of the Federalist forces in the House. Immediately after the event he informed Hamilton:

When the experiment was fully made, and acknowledged upon all hands that Burr was resolved not to commit himself . . . I came out with the declaration of voting for Jefferson. The means existed of electing Burr, but this required his co-operation. By deceiving one man (a great block-head), and tempting two (not incorruptible), he might have secured a majority of the States.

As for the disinterested moral qualities of Hamilton, so lauded by the historians, are they exemplified in this letter to Wolcott:

Yet it may be well enough to throw out a lure to (Burr), in order to tempt him to start for the plate, and lay the foundation of dissension between the two chiefs.

Charge No. 2: Aaron Burr murdered the great and noble Hamilton in cold blood.

Here again the textbook writers, with but few honorable exceptions, have fostered a myth. Says Mr. Montgomery:

Burr . . . shot Alexander Hamilton, his political opponent, in a duel. That act, hardly different from downright murder, brought him into disgrace.⁴

⁴ *The Leading Facts of American History*, by D. H. Montgomery. Ginn and Co. Page 197.

Writes Mr. Elson:

Burr was a bad character; his ambition was not that of a patriot, but of the self-seeker; his killing of Hamilton was little short of murder, as he knew that his skill with the pistol far exceeded that of his antagonist, and he was fully determined to end the career of the latter.⁵

Declares Professor Johnson:

Hamilton withheld his fire; Burr aimed with murderous intent, and Hamilton fell mortally wounded.⁶

Let us examine the premises of the learned historians.

In the first place, there is implicit in their excoriations the premise that death as the result of a duel — any duel — is *ipso facto* murder. But that is viewing the *mores* of other times through the tinted glasses of our own. Dueling was a recognized, accepted institution in the early Republic for the avenging of imputations upon one's personal honor. The list of prominent men who appeared on the field of honor is impressive. It includes, among a host of others, such men as General Gates, General Lee, Colonel Laurens, Senator Benton, John Randolph of Roanoke, De Witt Clinton, John and Robert Swartwout, William Coleman, Richard Riker, and Cap-

tain Thompson. Hamilton's eldest son, Philip, was slain in a duel. The most notorious duelist of his day was Andrew Jackson, who challenged at the drop of a hat, fought half a dozen times, killed his man, and was himself wounded in a brawl. Hamilton himself had once offered to fight General Lee, and had actually challenged James Monroe to pistols. But for these men there are no excoriations, no accusations of murder. Only for Burr are the anathemas reserved!

In the second place, the impression is skilfully given that Burr was motivated solely by an unworthy thirst for political revenge. You will search the quotations in vain for any other reason for the challenge. But the bald facts are wholly to the contrary. For years Hamilton had impeached with insinuations, calumnies, and downright lies Burr's private life, his character and his morals. Burr, wrote Hamilton on a political occasion,

is unprincipled, both as a public and a private man. . . . He is determined, as I conceive, to make his way to be the head of the popular party, and to climb *per fas aut nefas* (by hook or crook) to the highest honors of the State, and as much higher as circumstances may permit.

To another politician he declared:

Mr. Burr's integrity as an individual is not unimpeached. As a public man,

⁵ *Sidelights on American History*, by Henry W. Elson. Macmillan. Page 118.

⁶ *Jefferson and His Colleagues*, by Allen Johnson. Yale University Press. Page 112.

he is one of the worst sort—a friend to nothing but as it suits his interest and ambition. . . . Secretly turning liberty into ridicule, he knows as well as most how to make use of that name. In a word, if we have an embryo Caesar in the United States, 'tis Burr.

Hamilton denounced Burr to all and sundry. Burr was “without probity”, “a voluptuary by system”; in fine, “a man of *extreme* and *irregular* ambition; he is *selfish* to a degree which excludes all social affections; and he is decidedly *profligate*”.

Burr had long been aware of this profusion of bitter invective. Yet he could do nothing; say nothing. The reports had come to him under cover of confidences. The libels were embodied in private letters, or were uttered in select company. In 1804, however, during Burr's campaign for the governorship of New York, Hamilton's known epithets became public property. For the first time they appeared in print. A letter by one Charles D. Cooper was published in the newspapers. He wrote:

General Hamilton . . . has come out decidedly against Burr; indeed when he was here he spoke of him as a dangerous man and ought not to be trusted. . . . I could detail to you a still more despicable opinion which General Hamilton has expressed of Burr.

The lid was off; Burr could no

longer pretend to overlook what everyone knew. He demanded an explanation or an apology. Hamilton refused either; and a challenge followed. If ever a duel was justified under the code of the time, this one was.

Burr's deadly skill as a duelist is a myth out of whole cloth. Aside from purely second-hand gossip, I have found no factual evidence anywhere of Burr's prowess in this respect. And in opposition may be cited the evidence of a prior duel with John B. Church, Hamilton's brother-in-law. Burr missed his shot completely; Church's ball penetrated Burr's coat.

That Hamilton deliberately withheld his fire is the last item to be considered. It is true he left a post-mortem testament that such would be his intention. Burr naturally had no inkling of this. Besides, Hamilton *did* fire his pistol, in spite of allegations to the contrary. His own seconds testified to that. Whether, as claimed, it was an accidental discharge, is a matter of profitless controversy. Burr's seconds maintained emphatically that Hamilton took deliberate aim.

Charge No. 3: Aaron Burr betrayed his country and managed to escape the halter that he richly deserved.

Most of the textbook historians

find the "Burr Conspiracy", with all its ramifications, a simple matter. Burr was guilty as charged.

Writes Mr. Hawthorne:

Burr thought he could seduce the western country from its allegiance, and establish a dynasty; he would oust Congress at Washington with a few troops, and assassinate Jefferson.⁷

Professor Wertenbaker accepts without demur all the accusations:

Burr entertained an "insane plan" of seizing President Jefferson, appropriating the public funds, sailing for the Mississippi on the war-vessels at the navy yard, and proclaiming the secession of Louisiana and the West.⁸

Professor McLaughlin avers with proper judicial calm that Burr's schemes were

such as could be begotten only in the brain of a man who was so devoid of principle and patriotism himself that he could not appreciate such qualities in others.⁹

Professor Muzzey is almost as eloquent:

Freed from the halter which he richly deserved, Burr made his way to France, where he soon gave further proof of his treasonable nature.¹⁰

Professor Purcell states as a fact that Burr:

⁷ *United States*, by Julian Hawthorne. Volume 2. Peter F. Collier & Son. Page 695.

⁸ *The American People*, by T. J. Wertenbaker. Scribner's. Page 177.

⁹ *A History of the American Nation*, by Andrew C. McLaughlin. Appleton-Century. Page 221.

¹⁰ Muzzey, *supra*. Page 231.

collected a military force of a thousand men and supplies at Blennerhassett's Island.¹¹

There is no space here to go into the details of the "Burr Conspiracy". It was an infinitely involved affair, and not all the elements are crystal-clear even to this day. The facts must be found elsewhere. Walter McCaleb devoted an entire volume to the study; Beveridge gives several hundred pages of his *Life of John Marshall* to the matter; and I have analyzed all the known evidence in my own biography of Burr. Sufficient that neither Mr. McCaleb nor Beveridge, not to speak of myself, is at all convinced that there was at *any* time any intention on Burr's part to break up the Union. His scheme was primarily a filibuster directed against the Spanish-American possessions, at a time when the United States was engaged in an unofficial war with Spain, and the West was inflamed against the Don. When Jefferson, at the last moment, decided for peace, Burr's plans were left stranded, and were converted into a colonization scheme in the Southwest. All that I can do here is point out the obvious factual and interpretive errors of the passages I have quoted above.

The horrendous scheme of oust-

¹¹ Purcell, *supra*. Page 309.

ing Congress, seizing upon or assassinating Jefferson, etc., etc., appeared in the testimony of William Eaton, a self-styled "General" and military adventurer. Several circumstances make this testimony suspicious. For one thing Eaton did not see fit to denounce Burr until long after his alleged conversation with him; not, in fact, until Burr was already under arrest, and Jefferson was straining every personal and governmental sinew in an effort to convict him. For another, it is a curious fact that almost immediately after Eaton placed his deposition in Jefferson's hands, Congress suddenly authorized the payment to him of \$10,000 on a doubtful claim which had been before it for years, and which it had shown no previous disposition to honor!

Professor Muzzey's proof of Burr's treason in France would be damning enough if it were authentic. What is this proof? An alleged *memoire* from Burr to Fouché to the effect that "with 100,000 troops and a combined attack from Canada and Louisiana, the destruction of the United States was certain."¹² Unfortunately, the learned Professor apparently never took the trouble to check the source of his precious document. Had he

done so, he would have discovered to his dismay that its only existence lies in the heart of an anonymous denunciation, signed *A Citizen of the World*, who admitted to receiving his information in turn from another anonymous individual. Against this choice bit of "historical" evidence may be balanced the *actual* note sent by Burr to Fouché, which reposes to this day in the National Archives of France. It reads as follows:

Mr. Burr, from the United States of North America, having some months ago seen published in the *Moniteur* the expression of his majesty's assent to the independence of the Spanish American colonies, came to Paris to offer his services to accomplish that object and others connected therewith. He asked neither men nor money. He asked only the authorization of his majesty.

Professor Purcell's alarming estimate of "a military force of a thousand men and supplies at Blennerhassett's Island" shrinks unaccountably, in the evidence adduced by the government itself, to a paltry sixty men and boys, armed with the squirrel rifles that were indispensable equipment in the Western country. Certainly it was not such a force as should scare the living daylight out of a mighty nation, or even of its august President, Thomas Jefferson!

¹² Muzzey, *supra*. Page 231.

Charge No. 4: Aaron Burr seduced every woman he met.

The textbook writers love this. They roll it liquorishly on the tongue. A touch of envy is faintly visible under their pious denunciations. And I hasten to admit that, with certain modifications, there is a measure of truth in the charge. While Burr's wife was alive, he was a singularly faithful and devoted husband: but, after her death, he performed in the manner of most normal, vigorous males. Nor were the ladies of the day unwilling victims. They flung themselves in his path; they adored him; they yielded their all without murmur or quibble. Significantly, no complaints ever arose from the ladies themselves. *That* was left for future moralizers.

As a matter of fact, morals were pretty free and easy in the good old days. Hamilton, Ben Franklin, Gouverneur Morris, all pillars of present-day respectability, were notorious for their gallantries and their numerous mistresses. But

only Burr's reputation has suffered a coat of tar-and-feathers from the historians.

History is the creature of inertia, and folk-myths are difficult to change. No doubt the historians will continue to pen crisp sentences to the effect that Aaron Burr was a double-dyed villain, an immoral monster whose name should be anathema to all right-thinking Americans.

Burr was no epitome of all the virtues. He had his faults, and they were serious ones. But so had other heroes of the period whom we are accustomed to honor. His faults must not becloud the true issues — Burr did not intrigue against his political associates; he was not a murderer; and he was not a traitor to his country.

Instead, he was the victim of some of the worst mud-slinging in all history — and the mud has stuck. The portrait that has come down to us was painted by his enemies. It is time to change that portrait.



THE BRAIN TRUST

BY FRIEDRICH WILHELM NIETZSCHE

To scholars who become politicians the comic role is usually assigned; they have to be the good conscience of State policy.

"I'VE GOT THAT MILLION-DOLLAR SMILE"

By J. P. McEvoy

THE next governor of Texas is a Yankee from Ohio, a flour salesman and a radio crooner. He is forty-six years old, has never held a political office, and by his own confession knows nothing of politics and less of government. Yet he succeeded in defeating eleven other candidates for the nomination, all of them professional politicians with all the power of state and county machines behind them. He entered the primaries because a blind man wrote him a letter asking him to run for governor. He read the letter to his radio audience and asked them if he ought to run, modestly adding that he didn't think he was worthy of this great honor but he would leave it up to them. In the first week 54,499 replies came begging him to run and three begging him not to. The reason the three gave was because in their opinion he was too good to waste himself on the job.

He took his Hillbilly Band and the same sound truck he had been using for years for promoting his flour sales at county fairs and

soldiers' reunions and he went out through the State of Texas on a thirty-six-day campaign trip in which he covered 20,000 miles and averaged two or three mass meetings a day. The crowds were tremendous and followed him from one town to the other, attracted by this novel entertainment, which combined a revival sermon, a carnival spiel, and a radio program. Every important newspaper in Texas was against him, but when the votes were counted he had captured 573,166 out of a total of 1,114,855, some 30,000 more votes than all of his other competitors put together.

That, in brief, is the amazing story of W. Lee O'Daniel whose campaign was paid for by his supporters in dimes and quarters collected at mass meetings in little flour barrels labeled "Flour — Not Pork". And there was \$800 left over after the campaign which O'Daniel gave to the Flood Relief. After his nomination he was offered ten weeks of personal appearances for himself and his band at \$12,500 a

week, and when he was urged by some friends to accept he replied that he'd like to but he had to study up on his new job.

The American public has just heard of O'Daniel, but he has been a household word for nine years in Texas. Back in 1927 he was running a flour mill in Fort Worth and decided to use radio as an advertising medium. He hired three musicians, told them they were hillbillies, made himself master of ceremonies, and proceeded to give four fifteen-minute programs a week, shrewdly picking twelve-thirty midday for his time — partly because then it was practically unsalable and a bargain, but principally because he wanted to croon his message into the ears of the lonely housewives, knowing full well that women buy the flour as well as almost everything else in this star-spangled country. He had never been an actor, he had never been on the radio, but he talked to the housewives of Texas like a big brother and a pal, a guide, philosopher, and friend. He told them how to mend broken hearts and broken dishes, he sang songs to them, wrote birthday poems to them, cooed his way into their hearts, and his flour into their biscuits. He was Eddie Guest and Will Rogers and Dale Carnegie and Bing Crosby

all rolled into one — and for years at twelve-thirty sharp each day a fifteen-minute silence reigned in the State of Texas, broken only by mountain music and the dulcet voice of W. Lee O'Daniel singing *I've Got That Million-Dollar Smile*, plugging Hillbilly Flour with his slogan "Pass The Biscuits, Pappy", and reciting "The Boy Who Never Got Too Old To Comb His Mother's Hair".

When he started broadcasting, the experts around the radio station didn't think very much of him. They figured it was the band that was putting the program over, but O'Daniel changed the musicians and changed the music and still the popularity of the program grew, so the experts reluctantly had to admit that maybe it was O'Daniel and not the Hillbillies the public clamored for. It seems that early in the game O'Daniel either stumbled into, or deliberately figured out, that a microphone is an ear and not an auditorium — and you don't make public speeches to microphones, you don't shout into them any more than you would shout into your sweetheart's ear when you wanted to tell her you loved her. O'Daniel learned early that he had Texas by the ear and from that day on he cooed and caroled and gurgled into it, and the lads who

have watched him broadcast for years tell me that he can turn on the laughter or the tears with equal ease and at the slightest provocation. "He's just a born actor," they say. "He may not believe it, but he feels it at the time. It may be a plea for an aged mother or a tribute to an old horse — it makes no difference, his voice will break, the tears will come to his eyes and often he can't go on and the band has to start playing *Beautiful Texas* to keep things going."

II

O'Daniel's platform is the Golden Rule and the Ten Commandments. When you ask him how he is going to run the State of Texas on the Ten Commandments, he gives you that million-dollar smile and says, "Well, take the fourth commandment, Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother: Doesn't that mean old-age pensions just as plain as day?" A lot of voters saw the point after he made it and they liked the man who could show them how to be religious, patriotic, and practical — all with just one vote.

How practical is O'Daniel? Practical enough to run one sack of flour into half a million dollars, to have been the president of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce; to

broadcast as follows in one of his campaign speeches:

I am not saying that all of Mr. Roosevelt's plans are sound and right, but as long as he has the national grab-bag open and as long as all the other states are grabbing, I'm gonna grab all I can for the State of Texas and will do all I can to bring within the borders of our grand and glorious state every dollar that we can get — and the old-age pension plan provides a way of getting that Federal money, and if Texas doesn't get it, some other State will — so for that sound business reason I favor paying the old folks of Texas and letting Uncle Sam match our payments.

To pay \$15 a month to every eligible candidate in Texas would cost the State thirty million dollars a year, and when this inquiring reporter asked O'Daniel how he was going to raise the money (we were at the Casa Manana night club in Fort Worth) O'Daniel pointed to a juggler on the stage and said, "You see what he's doing? It looks impossible but he's doing it." Later he gave the large audience of Texans the same solid gold nugget of statecraft and they cheered him to the echo. Obviously it was only a small part of the same audience which cheered his Mother's Day and his candidacy, retaining the best features of each. Since you may never hear one of O'Daniel's broadcasts unless he runs for President — and it *can* happen here — these few

sentences from his Mother's Day program will give you an idea:

Good morning, friends: this is W. Lee O'Daniel speaking. This is Mother's Day from a sentimental standpoint only. Tired, forlorn, disappointed, and destitute Texas mothers several months ago thought they saw Mother's Day breaking in the East—but the golden glint preceding sunrise faded and faded again and again until today perhaps the practical Mother's Day is more obscure than ever before. But from the Texas plains and hills and valleys came a little breeze wafting on its crest more than 57,000 voices of one accord—we want W. Lee O'Daniel for governor of Texas. Why that avalanche of mail? Surely each and every one of you 57,000 folks could not have known that W. Lee O'Daniel is an only living son of one of those tired, forlorn, disappointed, and destitute mothers—a son who had played at that widowed mother's skirts, while during each day and way into the darkness of the nights she washed the dirt and grime from the clothes of the wealthy on an old, worn-out washboard—for the paltry pittance of twenty-five cents per day—and that by that honest drudgery provided corn bread and beans for her children which she had brought back with her from the Valley of the Shadow of Death. . . .

But you would do O'Daniel a great wrong if you believed that his success has been achieved entirely through tributes to Mother, public approval of the Ten Commandments, and mountain music. He promised the people of the State a business government by a

business man. He told them in effect that good government is merely good business plus adequate policing. He hammered "professional politicians, big monied interests and their mouthpieces the big political newspapers", and promised the people happiness and prosperity if they would elect "the common-citizens' candidate". He reminded them that Texas was an empire, that it was rich in undeveloped resources and if they elected him he would fill the State with new industries and darken the skies with the smoke of a thousand new factories. He gave them homely examples of what he meant by telling them that as he drove to town he passed hundreds of acres of tomatoes, rotting because there was no market for them, and then when he ordered ketchup in the restaurants he discovered the label on the bottle said "Made in New York". "Make your own ketchup," he shouted, "and put more people to work. Make your own clothes out of your own cotton. Elect me and I will bring the mills here. My slogan is, 'Less Johnson-grass and politicians, and more smoke stacks and business men'." And then he added as a clincher "Go ahead and try me for two years. You can't be any worse off than you have been." They will

tell you down in Texas that a lot of voters had just about reached that conclusion and that many of the votes were not so much for O'Daniel as against politicians.

III

O'Daniel admits he had no thought of being Governor when he started running — he did it because it would help sell his Hillbilly Flour, which it did, and plenty. When the straw votes showed that he was running ahead of the other candidates he began to suspect that he had a bear by the tail, but never in his wildest dreams did he or anyone else imagine that he would poll more votes than all the other candidates put together. When I talked to him a week after the final count he was still dazed, although he was trying to carry it off jauntily. He had just returned from inspecting military maneuvers and said, "When I saw all those soldiers marching by with their guns and tanks, suddenly I realized that I was commander-in-chief of an army." And there was awe in his voice. What was he, a flour salesman, doing as commander-in-chief of the Texas National Guard?

Early in the campaign Texas was flooded with photographs of the O'Daniel family. This brought him

many votes and you can understand why, for Mrs. O'Daniel is slim, gracious, with a gentle smile and keen blue eyes. The two boys are tall, dark, and handsome, and the daughter is athletic and a beauty. The children went everywhere with their father on the campaign. The boys played the banjo and the fiddle in his band and the girl passed one of the little flour barrels for collections. Mrs. O'Daniel stayed home and ran her husband's campaign from the dining room of the family residence.

When I visited the O'Daniel home it was still the political headquarters. The living room was full of desks, the dining room full of files and the family was eating in the kitchen. Mrs. O'Daniel had just returned from Austin where she had inspected the Governor's mansion. I asked her how she was going to like it after living in a modest two-story brick home. "It's beautiful," she said, "but the servant problem worries me a little bit. You see, they use prison help — trustees I think they call them — and it seems the cook was a murderer. Of course I believe in giving everybody a chance, but supposing I didn't like the cooking?"

A few minutes later we had breakfast together, the Governor and I, in the kitchen, and the first

thing we were served was cake. "I have to eat it," he said. "People make all kinds of things out of my flour and send them to us."

"You'd think they'd send biscuits," I muttered, but the Governor didn't answer.

At this point a character right out of Dickens dropped in for a whispered conference and I was introduced to O'Daniel's spiritual adviser and the Richelieu of the new regime, the Rev. J. Leslie Finnell, pastor of the Magnolia Avenue Christian Church, Fort Worth. I asked him how long he had been in politics and he said: "I've been a minister twenty years."

Later we were joined by a third member of this new triumvirate, Carr P. Collins, Chairman of the Board of The Crazy Water Company, a highly publicized catharsis.

It was Collins who gave O'Daniel his first major assistance by turning over large portions of his own broadcasting time and substituting selling talks for O'Daniel's candidacy in place of blurbs for Crazy Water. Wiseacres say that Collins is the Mark Hanna of this new set-up, but they also admit that O'Daniel's real power is in his personal popularity and that he doesn't need to wear any man's collar.

O'Daniel himself summed it up when I said, "You've done a masterly job of selling, but what are you going to do about delivering the goods if the machine gets after you?"

The governor-to-be smiled and held up his hand cupped like a microphone.

"I've got my own machine," he said. "This little microphone."



PORTRAIT OF A POLITICIAN

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Kent: Fellow, I know thee.

Oswald: What dost thou know me for?

Kent: A knave, rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking, whoreson, glass-gazing, super-serviceable, finical rogue; a one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd, in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch.

DO YOU WEAR EYEGLASSES?

By SIDNEY A. FOX

WE COME into the world blind, blue-eyed, and free of illusions. But not for long. In the early months of life we learn how to see. And then most of us acquire eye troubles — and misconceptions. As a result too many needlessly bespectacled faces adorn our streets.

The most commonly misunderstood of our common ailments is the headache. With the help of advertising, many of us have come to believe that *headache* means *eye-strain*, and that eyeglasses are the inevitable cure. Now of course some headaches *are* due to eye-strain. But not every pain-in-the-head is of ocular origin, any more than every pain-in-the-neck lies between the head and shoulders. There are numerous non-ocular diseases in which headache is an important and, frequently, an only symptom: for example, sinusitis, migraine, high blood-pressure, diabetes, kidney diseases, brain lesions, neuroses, digestive disturbances, and endocrine dysfunctions. The curative effect of a pair of glasses on all these is exactly *nil*.

Neither do glasses “strengthen” or “weaken” eyes. Parents who wait for the day when little Mary may throw away her thick unsightly glasses are waiting for the millennium. That day will never come, particularly if she is near-sighted. True, some who have worn glasses in childhood have later discarded them. It is not the glasses, however, that are responsible for such beneficent miracles. They merely help during the formative years until the eyes become old enough and strong enough to fight their own battles.

Likewise, when you hear people say, “I don’t want to start wearing glasses because I’ll have to wear them all the time”, you are in the presence of a myth. Even wearing the wrong glasses rarely injures the eyes permanently. We simply forget how poorly we once saw, and, having become accustomed to better things, the change is so marked when the glasses are removed that we think the eyes have been “spoiled”.

Which brings us to what is per-

haps the commonest eye fallacy of all: that the further you can see the better your eyesight. Actually, good distant vision does not always mean efficient eyesight. If you could read every character, even the tiniest, on the oculist's vision-testing card, it would still be no indication of normal eyes. As a matter of fact, the more farsighted the individual the more trouble he has seeing things close at hand. And since much of our work is done at or around the reading distance, some of our eagle-eyed friends are at a great disadvantage.

Despite this fact, the mixed blessing of eye examinations is visited on thousands of workers and schoolchildren every day. What dilutes the blessing is that factory nurses and schoolteachers, whose sole claim to ophthalmologic omniscience is based on the distant-vision test, have become eye specialists to a large portion of our population.

By comparison, the problem of the nearsighted or myopic individual is simple. He simply does not see well. His bad luck lies in the fact that once having become nearsighted, he remains so to the end of his days. For myopia is an irreversible physiological process. Neither time nor glasses nor the surgeon's skill can change it. If you

are nearsighted you may wear glasses for twenty years and when you take them off you will be as handicapped as ever.

We do not know what causes nearsightedness. But we do know that as middle age approaches, the victims find increasing difficulty in focusing upon near objects. *Old-sight*, or, as the oculist calls it, *presbyopia*, is with us, and we find ourselves holding reading matter farther and farther away. Contrary to popular belief, we do not become farsighted with old age; it is simply that our vision for near objects grows worse. This is normal, has no relation to general health, and is one of the important signs of aging. So that the coy young thing of the indefinite thirties who reads her book at arm's length is quite probably a definite forty—and more. She waits until her arms become too short and then seeks help for her eyes. A skillful masseuse may give her a school-girl complexion but, like a horse's teeth, the eyes cannot lie about age.

Perhaps one of the greatest wrongs done the defenseless human eye is the trust placed in boric acid. It is a beautiful trust, but like many others, unworthy of confidence. Sprung from an illegitimate source, ripened in the garden of hearsay, and yellowed in false tra-

dition, the hoary old myth of Boric the Omnipotent waxes more hale and hearty with the years. The probabilities are, however, that it has done a great deal more damage than good. At its best it is an innocuous, mildly antiseptic eyewash, not much more efficacious than the same amount of sterile water. Many visual ills are of the minor, self-limiting variety which get better in spite of anything we do. Boric acid, of course, gets credit for these. But the severe ills proceed at a furious rate despite Niagaras of cold, lukewarm, and hot boric solution—which might as well be poured down the back as into the eye. Indeed, serious cases of intra-ocular inflammation often result from neglectful self-dosing with boric washes.

The boric fable is matched by the “drops” myth. Yet the zealot who doses himself copiously with boric acid will shrink with horror at the suggestion of the malevolent drops used by the physician to dilate eyes during an examination. The objector has rarely experienced them himself, but he has heard of a seventh son of a seventh son whose light was darkened, or dimmed, by drops. I do not know, however, of a single case in which drops have caused permanent damage. They are necessary merely to bring out

the full measure of refractive error, so that the proper correction may be prescribed.

The word *cataract* also has the effect of stirring horror in many people: the whole subject of cataracts is surrounded by an umbra of superstition and a penumbra of fear, hard to penetrate. To a large extent, however, these fears are unjustified. A fair proportion of cataracts never reach maturity nor destroy useful vision. Following extraction of a cataract and proper correction with glasses, good vision is the usual rule.

Not long ago a pair of inventive gentlemen came out with a new type of eyeglass to prevent cataracts. The invention was based on the theory that all cataracts are caused by hot infra-red rays, which in some way coagulate the inside of the eye. These glasses were designed to “cool out” the rays. But if the theory were true, all our eyes would be cooked hard at the end of a hot summer.

It is quite possible that all these myths and other misconceptions about the eye will yield to the force of modern enlightenment. Probably five hundred years from now, all our present-day fallacies and superstitions will have been forgotten. But by then, there will be a whole set of new ones.

THE OTHER SIDE

This department presents the views of some of those who most sharply disagree with THE MERCURY's editorial policy.

GOVERNMENT-OWNED RAILROADS

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

THE number of people who believe that government ownership of railroads is inevitable is quite large; the number of those desiring it *now* extremely small. Joseph B. Eastman, who has been a member of the Interstate Commerce Commission since 1919 and was appointed Federal co-ordinator of transportation in 1933, and is the greatest railroad expert in the country, says that government ownership must come — some day. THE AMERICAN MERCURY has printed an article to that effect, though opposing the change. The head of a transcontinental railway has told me that he is for it, but not until he can get the price for his railroad he thinks he should have. It is all distinctly suggestive of the middle-period of the Abolition struggle, when so many good people favored gradual or eventual Emancipation, but were never

ready for the inevitable major operation.

The arguments in favor of immediate government ownership are many, among them the following: (1) If the government should seek to purchase control of the roads in the open market, this is the time to do it, with stocks and bonds selling at low depression prices and many of the railroads in bankruptcy. (2) This is the time for the government to act because nearly all the railroads are in a desperate situation, with no hope of private banking aid; many would not be earning their bond interest were it not that they are dangerously neglecting the up-keep of their properties. (3) It is admitted on all sides that if there are not to be wholesale bankruptcies, despite recent increases in freight-rates and passenger-fares, the government must help

out by loans. (4) To remedy the whole situation by temporary loans to certain railroads is merely stopping a few leaks; immediate restoration of the credit of the railroads and their prompt and adequate financing can only come if the government makes a clean job of it, recognizing that the salvation of the roads has gone far beyond the possibility of private financing. Every banker and every railroad executive admits this. (5) Such being the case, the government should advance the money temporarily needed only as part of the major operation of purchasing the railroads at a fair price. (6) It is universally agreed that resumption of spending for actually necessary railroad equipment would do more than any other one thing, except a huge housing program, to aid in the restoration of prosperity in the nation.

Everyone admits that if the railroads could be brought under one management enormous savings could be made by the combining of terminals, by mass purchases, by the ending of needless competition, the unnecessary duplication of train service, and so on. There is marked disagreement as to just how great these savings would be, but there are competent critics who aver that they

would be large enough to enable the government, in ordinary times, not only to meet all expenses and interest, but to retire gradually at one hundred cents on the dollar the bond issues of the railroads. One has only to recall the huge sums the railroads have paid in commissions to Wall Street bankers for new financing, refinancing, and often for crooked or incompetent reorganizations, to realize what could be saved if the government did the financing. That the government can float the bonds which would be needed is perfectly obvious if one looks at the situation of the junior securities now issued by the government at low rates of interest.

II

At this point come the inevitable objections to government ownership *now*: that it would be another terrific job when the government has more than it can handle well; that it will mean another dangerous increase in the already too-great powers of Washington; and a huge increase in the Federal bureaucracy. To these is added the statement that government-management means waste and inefficiency, as witness what happened when the railroads were taken

over by the government during the war. Obviously these arguments will be made against government-ownership fifty years hence as well as now. But this is the place to answer them.

First, I recall that the government took over the railroads during the war simply because they were breaking down under private management and were unable to handle the necessary supplies and movement of troops. I believe with Walker D. Hines, the second war-time Federal director of railroads, whose book on what was actually accomplished should be required reading before anybody is allowed to say what happened in the war years, that the government did a good war-time job with the railroads. I also believe that a war-time experiment is not of itself evidence of what the government can do in ordinary peace time. As for government management always meaning waste and mismanagement, in all the history of American business there have never been more shocking cases of mismanagement, nepotism, inefficiency, corruption, and betrayal of the public interest as have been furnished again and again in our railroading as a whole. To take only one example, the management of the New

Haven Railroad Company has been a long story of waste, graft, and failure adequately to develop a railroad which had a natural monopoly within the richest manufacturing districts on the Eastern seaboard.

Next let me point out that my plan for government ownership does not visualize the appointment of a Secretary of Railroads with a seat in the Cabinet, or the establishment of any bureaucracy whatsoever. The device which should be utilized is the same the government has successfully used in the management of the Panama Railroad and Steamship Company, the Alaska Railway, and the Mississippi Barge Canal Company. There is disagreement as to just how profitable the last named company has been, but no one can dispute Major General Ashburn's statement that politics have never entered into the conduct of the corporation and that it is just as efficiently managed as is the Panama Canal—incidentally I have yet to hear of any scandal in connection with the Alaska Railway. The scheme to be adopted is the formation of a corporation, the United States Railway Company, similar to the Railway Express Company, with a board of directors to be appointed by the Presi-

dent representing four groups, the government, the railway employees, the shippers, and the traveling public, just as there is a special board of directors for the other companies I have mentioned. The headquarters of the company should not be in Washington, but in Chicago or elsewhere, and it is idle to say that a satisfactory executive could not be obtained when Joseph B. Eastman is available.

This device of a government-owned corporation in place of a government bureaucracy worked extremely well in a large number of cases under the German Republic. There, on occasion, the government bought fifty-one per cent of the stock of the company and allowed the remainder to continue in the hands of private investors, the government then appointing a majority of the directors and making no other changes whatsoever in the structure or the management of the corporation. The placing of representatives of labor on the board of directors of the proposed railway corporation is a vitally important point; their presence would enable them to get a complete insight into the financial and management problems, and give labor the stimulating sense of taking part in the management. It would be easy to specify

that the directors representing the shippers and the traveling public should be nominated to the President by traffic or freight associations.

In this connection we should recall the great protests that were made, first when the government went into the parcel-post business—all the old arguments of waste, extravagance, mismanagement, and bureaucratic methods—and the similar outcry when, in 1918, the government wiped out the private express companies and formed the American Railway Express. Every innovation of this kind produces the same protests, yet the truth is that there has been a steady improvement in the efficiency of government management, and I say this in spite of the waste and extravagance and mismanagement of many of the New Deal undertakings. A country that can run the Panama Canal as we have, that has made such a magnificent record with our national parks and forests, and our Coast Guard, can certainly make a success of railroad management if it desires to. The fact that almost every American comes into contact with railroading gives the assurance that mismanagement would quickly be forced upon the attention of every American voter.

THE STATE OF THE UNION

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

WPA — The Modern Tammany

THE country seems to be keeping up a polite and pleasant fiction about the WPA's relation to the government. Every once in a while a story pops out that the WPA is being used in one place or another for political purposes. Usually the story is backed up by confessional or circumstantial or documentary evidence — sometimes all three — which makes it look fairly plausible. When this occurs the country-at-large apparently files a tacit verdict of “not proven”, or, in an exceptionally flagrant case like that of the Kentucky primaries, of “not guilty, but don't do it again”. In the few instances where the charge is likely to be too embarrassing, the blame is laid on some local understrapper, and the matter is promptly forgotten. In short, there appears to be a tacit agreement all round that the WPA shall not under any circumstances be openly acknowledged as an integral part of Mr. Farley's political machine, expected to function as such, and, if need be, coerced into functioning as such. No one will say that it might not

be just that, but to say that on evidence offered it *is* just that and cannot in any kind of reason be regarded as anything *but* that, would be horribly bad form. It would be tantamount to saying that the Administration is deliberately capitalizing destitution and distress; in other words, that the New Deal's whole high command, all the way from Mr. Ickes up to Mr. Farley, and from Mr. Hopkins down to Mr. Roosevelt, are a parcel of peculiarly despicable racketeers — and that simply isn't done.

There is something to be said for this attitude. When persons are under suspicion, they should have the benefit of every reasonable doubt. The law provides for this, and the natural sense of justice insists on it. But in establishing a reasonable doubt the persons' known character and previous behavior play a great part. Two men, say, are found messing about a safe at night. If they turn out to be gangsters with a record, and are in possession of burglar's tools, that is one thing. If they turn out to be

officials of the bank, whose accounts are all straight, and who say they are checking up on a report of trouble with the time-lock, that is another thing. The circumstances are easily sifted, and that is the end of the matter. If, however, the officials resent investigation, or try to shirk it, or get on their high horse about it, they simply enhance suspicion, and do themselves no kind of good.

The alleged activities of the WPA in Kentucky have made me think that the country is overdoing the judicial attitude a little. THE MERCURY lately printed a letter from a WPA worker there which gave a circumstantial account of flagrant coercion practiced on himself and many others. In the correspondence which followed,¹ what especially interested me was this statement from the same worker (the italics are mine):

Soon after Mr. Ben Dishman, area engineer for Whitley County, had told me that Roosevelt was feeding me, and that the WPA was not big enough to hold any man who was against any person, program or thing that Roosevelt sponsored, and especially Barkley, I received a circular letter from Mr. Harry L. Hopkins, telling me that I was free to vote as I pleased; but on that same day I received a visit from my boss, who

stated that I had been reported again for favoring Chandler. When I showed him my letter from Mr. Hopkins, he said, "You are not putting confidence in that, are you?" I replied that surely Mr. Hopkins would not lie. He said, "You should know better; that is merely to whitewash Hopkins's face. He has to do something. The letter does not mean a damn thing. Should you attempt to report the matter, *the same man who gave the orders would be sent to investigate the charges.* The only result would be that you would be blackballed from WPA for life."

It is of course possible that all this is a monstrous exaggeration or a downright falsehood. If so, it would seem all the more important that for the honor of the Administration the worker's story should be hunted down and refuted, and he himself dealt with as he deserves. It alleges a dirty business — a very dirty business — either connived at or initiated by Mr. Hopkins, and condoned, to say the least, by the New Deal's general staff. As in the case of the bank officials, if the Administration shirks or obstructs an investigation of this statement, or strikes a top-lofty attitude towards it, a profound suspicion of the WPA's relation to the government would seem bound to be revived and strengthened.

For my part, I think the record of the WPA's original formation is worth going over again, exactly

¹ The editor of THE MERCURY tells me he has laid the whole of this correspondence before the Senate committee on campaign expenditures.

as one would re-examine the previous record of the bank officials. One would want to know what the bank officials might have done in this-and-that circumstance of their previous career, and what they actually did do. Was their conduct open to doubt; was it shifty or suspicious? Did they behave carelessly, honorably, straightforwardly, and did they show a commanding sense of the importance of keeping their reputations clear?

Just so with the Administration. In 1932 it was confronted by a situation which could be met in either of two ways. By meeting it in one way, the Administration would create a coercible political asset of prodigious value. By meeting it in another way, it would still create a valuable good-will asset, but not coercible. If, therefore, we recall the circumstances, consider what the Administration might have done, and then consider what it actually did, we have gone a long way towards determining what its purposes and intentions were.

II

The circumstances were these: In 1932 there were among us great numbers of people who had always been and would always be utterly worthless from the economic point

of view. They were unable to make a living, had always been so and would always be so; they were born that way, for which there was no help. They were in their chronic state of unemployment at the time. Then besides these we had a smaller body of labor so poorly skilled as to be always on the salvage-edge of incompetence, and economic causes had put this body of labor out of employment — causes which were beyond immediate economic control, and of course beyond political control.

Now, suppose that the Administration had wished to act disinterestedly and honorably in these circumstances, what would it have done — assuming, of course, that it was its duty to act at all? Is it conceivable that it did not perceive the opportunity to weld together at one stroke the greatest mass of coercible voting-power ever assembled in the country? Can anyone pretend that Mr. Roosevelt could not perceive this, or that his Tammany-trained janissary, Mr. Farley, could not perceive it? Can any one bamboozle himself into believing that the political architectonics of the WPA and the general Relief-program were only a happy accident? Well, then, if Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Farley, not being born yesterday, did perceive the political

possibilities inherent in this program, how might they have acted?

They might have put it not only out of their own power, but out of any succeeding Administration's power, to take advantage of these possibilities. Two measures, both very simple, would have sufficed. First, Mr. Roosevelt might have demanded that every recipient of governmental aid should be disfranchised while receiving it. Second, he might have demanded that governmental aid should be confined strictly to supplying the destitute with food, clothing and shelter, on a system of food-tickets and non-interchangeable vouchers; no tobacco, beer, moving-pictures, reading-matter, and not one cent of money under any circumstances.

Was this practicable? Of course it was. In 1932 Mr. Roosevelt could have got anything he wanted. Suppose he had explained the situation over the radio, told the country candidly all about the possibilities of corruption inherent in the Relief program, and said he wished above all things to have his Administration go down in history as a standing example of decency and integrity in the face of temptation. Would the country have "got it"? I believe so; and as for the country

standing by him, I believe that this one speech would have copper-riveted his popularity and made it impregnable, so that while it would have been a dreadful blow to local politicians everywhere, they would not have dared withstand him for a moment.

But what actually happened? Both these measures were proposed, not of course officially, but by citizens who saw what might be coming and were properly anxious about it. These proposals promptly threw the Administration into a great fit of unctuous rectitude. It was especially horrified at the first proposal, although there is plenty of precedent for disfranchising paupers, and even if there were not, it was certainly called for as an emergency-measure, far less dubious than any of the "must" legislation which the Congress was busily rubber-stamping at the time. But the Administration could not dream of subjecting luckless citizens to such gratuitous humiliation and obloquy; the mere suggestion was slanderous, the product of an evil mind. If the news-reports were correct, even the Secretary of Labor, who I truly believed was a cut above that sort of thing, was very outspoken against it. So both proposals were smothered, and the WPA and Reliefs

generally were allowed to gravitate into their present anomalous position.

How far would suspected bank officials get, with such a record behind them? If they were shown to have confronted a situation which had immense illegitimate profit in it, and had indignantly refused to take a simple and easy means of putting that profit out of reach, what would one think? Then when subsequently it appeared almost beyond peradventure that they were raking in that profit with both hands, what would one be bound to think?

For these reasons, as I said, I believe the country is bending over backward a little in its attitude towards the political status of the WPA. It should by no manner of means be forgotten that Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Farley are very astute and realistic politicians, and ac-

cording to Abraham Lincoln, there is no such thing as a politician who is honest. Lincoln frankly gave himself as authority for this statement, saying that he knew what he was talking about, for he was a politician himself. *A priori*, therefore, it is highly improbable that two politicians having "interests apart from those of the people", as Lincoln said, would make any but a most unscrupulous use of such an opportunity as the general program of Relief held out. So when this *a priori* probability is tacked on to such evidence as I have cited *a posteriori*, the case seems to be pretty thoroughly established. If the people like that sort of thing, or are indifferent to it, that is certainly their privilege, but in my poor opinion the keeping up of any pretense about its character is a first-class exhibit of infantilism.



EXPLANATION OF THE ROOSEVELT DEPRESSION

BY NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

A wise prince ought to adopt such a course that his citizens will always in every sort and kind of circumstance have need of the State and of him, and then he will always find them faithful.

AMERICANA

CALIFORNIA

THE Hon. William E. Riker, candidate for governor, announces the pension plank in his platform and promises to save the world:

Here is a true solution for all disabled and pension-minded people, and is one that none can legitimately complain about or will ever meet with successful opposition.

Social doctors will be employed in prescribing the proper amount of a just and lenient pension, as does the good doctor prescribe the proper treatment and medicine for his patient. No two are exactly alike and this same rule will be used in determining just how much money will be placed in the hands of the one receiving a pension. According to one's social, physical and mental circumstances the social doctors will determine the necessary amount to be prescribed. These social doctors are paid to treat each patient with the greatest of consideration, so that he as well as the State will be honored as a good social fatherly physician.

Owing to the many abuses and poor judgment that might develop with some who receive pensions, they will be given a checkbook to write out checks for what is purchased. This system will be a tell-tale of those who are guilty of abusing the sacred cause of receiving pensions. Also a full check will be kept and openly published of every detail of its entire administration.

MASSACHUSETTS

THE founder of the Eloist Ministry, Inc., and publisher of *Inspiration* magazine, issues a manifesto describing a newer New Deal for the fortunate citizens of Brookline:

My Angels are now enveloping the planet with a golden glory which is visible to My seers, and will soon be visible even to the physical vision of millions. . . . I have inspired these Victorious Immortals of hundreds of thousands of years of experience to come close to earth and organize My Administration among men. The Foundation of My Reign was established on June 19, 1936, when the moon eclipsed the sun in conjunction with Betelgeuse. . . . All My children on earth who aspire to vibrate to the wave-length of My benevolent Will are being drawn together to receive My revelation of the true way of life. They will respond, and out of chaos they will create a new social order based upon the practice of Benevolence in thought, word, and deed.

The wave-lengths of both matter and mind are being changed by the potency of My Will operating through My Angels. . . . Those who resist the Reign of Benevolence will be taken as spirits out of the aura of the earth and colonized by wise teachers in a distant heaven adapted to their slow rate of development. . . .

Now is the beginning of the new

heaven and the new earth! Again I walk and talk in My servants on earth. My Tabernacle is filled with My Glory, so that all may learn of me, and fulfil My Will on earth as My Angels fulfil it in heaven.

I AM

The Voice of the Almighty

WALTER DEVOE

MICHIGAN

THE nobility of Justice as reflected in Detroit and reported by the alert *Free Press*:

Recorder's Judge John P. Scallen was busting around Tuesday looking at his court schedule for Friday. "I hope we will have something good because I have a distinguished guest who is going to sit on the bench with me for a few hours," he explained.

The distinguished guest is Connie Mack, manager of the Philadelphia Athletics. When Judge Scallen met him several months ago he showed much interest in the work the judge was doing.

"On my next visit to Detroit I would like to listen in on a few cases," said Connie.

Judge Scallen was reminded of his promise Tuesday by Pat White, a former baseball player, now employed at Receiving Hospital.

"I am going to preside at early sessions (drunk and disorderly cases). I think we will have a lot of cases Connie will get a laugh out of," Judge Scallen told White.

MISSISSIPPI

A SOUTHERN statesman rises to the defense of his profession, as chronicled in *Editor and Publisher*:

Publication of *nom de plumes* would become libelous in Mississippi under terms of a bill introduced in the Senate by Senator Frank Harper of Hattiesburg, a lawyer. The south Mississippi solon, referred to in some newspapers as "Senator Peachtree Salesman Harper", due to a former occupation as a fruit tree salesman, would have the law read: That any editor or business manager of a newspaper or periodical be liable to \$500 fine for printing or allowing such to be printed.

NEW YORK

UP-TO-THE-MINUTE technique of the striking brethren, detailed in the pages of the *Challenger*:

Novelty seems to have become the normal in labor battles. The fight against the R. H. Donnelly Co. of Chicago, publisher of the classified phone books among others, introduces the latest weapon. Labor men are refusing to use the directory and are asking information for the number. The information girls are told that they will not use the books and suggest a new publisher for 1939. A nation-wide campaign of this type will be very effective. Remember Donnelly publishes *Life*, *Time*, and the mail order catalogs among others.

PENNSYLVANIA

THE eternal servant problem is stated frankly and flatly in a want-ad published by the celebrated Warren *Times-Mirror*:

LADY, 35, wishes work by day or week. No references. Do you want to take a chance?

DOWN TO EARTH

BY ALAN DEVOE

The Over-Civilized

MANY reasons have been adduced for the unrest and imbalance currently unsettling the world. This pervasive disquiet has been ascribed to the virus loosed by Karl Marx, to the engorgements of Capitalism, and (by an eminent Baptist divine) to the flouting of the Sabbath. Hardly anyone appears to have suggested, however, the most obvious of all possible reasons — that the trouble with civilization is simply the fact that it is too civilized.

Yet there is much to recommend this simple thesis. The resolute effort of our civilization has been toward destroying as thoroughly as possible the ancient natural bonds which once bound us to our earth. It has been our earnest endeavor, and our proud accomplishment, to enseat ourselves in dwellings hermetically insulated, and to obtain synthetic seasons by the click of a thermostat. We have contrived by incandescent light to make the night so indistinguishable from day that the quotidian spinning of our planet is scarcely remarked.

With tons of asphalt we have walled off the earth so that our feet no longer press against it, and with monster erections of stone and steel our cities have blotted out the sky. By a thousand ingenious inventions we have insured that Civilized Man need never again know the feel of rain against his skin, need never break and sift the soil with his hands, need never crouch beside a fire and breathe into his lungs the smell of burning pine-boughs. By myriad devices we have labored to cut off those racial taproots which originally were deep-thrusted in the earth.

All this enormous endeavor has wrought a civilization in which the inhabitants command a dazzling and unprecedented variety of dentifrices, electric ice-boxes, chromium-plated cigarette lighters and kindred gadgetty appurtenances. But it has also wrought a civilization in which the inhabitants are almost wholly divorced from all their natural aboriginal ways of thinking and acting and feeling. All the old rhythms of living have

been abolished. With no sky over his head and no earth under his feet, modern urban man lives as a homeless transient in a series of apartments. He grows no garden; he draws no water; he builds no fire. The frost never touches his marrow; the hot sun of Summer is mitigated and dispelled before it can reach him; he is as remote from the rhythms and rituals of earth as though he were no creature of it at all. His copulation is a stylized acrobatic, sterile and intentionless; there is no blood at his birth, and no smell of corruption when he dies. Every sign and symbol of his earth-sprung origin has been carefully disguised or entirely removed.

This withdrawal and isolation from the experiences and sensations which shaped the lives and the life-views of our clay-stained forefathers has rendered us a uniquely rootless tribe, incapable of orienting ourselves sensibly, incapable of assaying basic values, incapable of feeling within us those queer, deep stirrings which were known to men who dug in the loam with strong spatulate fingers and who were acquainted with seasons and winds and weathers. Once upon a time it was a man's consuming ambition to own a piece of land, a little segment of his

planet which he could till and cultivate and make the site of his home. When he took title to his plot of soil he acquired a great deal more than merely a piece of real estate. He came into possession, too, of a sense of security, an inward peace. His universe now had a point of focus, and from his stewardship over soil and plant and tree he learned the meaning of responsibility. He raised his family and tended his acres and felled the elm and ash and cedar for his fire, and in homely every-day activities he learned at first hand the inter-relationships between work and production, and was made cognizant of the deep basic harmonies. He aided at births, and was acquainted with the agony and the sickness and the blood; he laid out his dead, straightening stiffened limbs and closing gaping mouths, and he dug the earth-pits for interment of their brittle bones. The natural world around him had an immediacy and a profound meaningfulness. He stared at the cirrus or cumulus clouds above his roof-tree and read presagings; the flight of geese had its message; he saw the tansy and vervain and yarrow in his meadow-lot as herbs to be fashioned into healing decoctions for his times of sickness. He knew, of his own experience, the welling

exultation which can come to a man when he smells in his nostrils the pitchy fragrance of new-hewn wood, or when on a Winter day he sets a fire of birch-logs crackling on his hearth, or when he just lies on his back in a field, after a day's labor, and stares up at the sun.

We have changed all that. We have shut away the sun, lest it incommode us, and have disassociated ourselves from the earth lest it soil our shoes. We do not seek, as our natural goal, the proprietorship of a piece of land, but instead prefer transient lodgements to which no responsibility attaches. Millions of us know hardly more of food than that it is a commodity brought by a waiter; hardly more of water than that it emanates from a faucet; hardly more of Winter-warmth than that a janitor provides it. We delegate the whole superintendence of births to hired hospitalers, that we may hear no scream and smell no blood; we delegate the death-chores to sleek morticians, that even the most tremendous Fact of all may not too starkly intrude upon us. Hedged around by careful screens and artful camouflages, we pass our days as remotely from reality as though we dwelt in another dimension. The fat teats of cattle are still our milk-source, the salted hides of

slaughtered foxes and martens still clothe us, the crash of the fir-tree still gives us wood; but we are grown aloof and forgetful of these old awarenesses and recognizances. The life-experience of modern man is a thin diluted thing, hardly more than a pale perverted semblance of the robust and richly-implicated adventure which it once was.

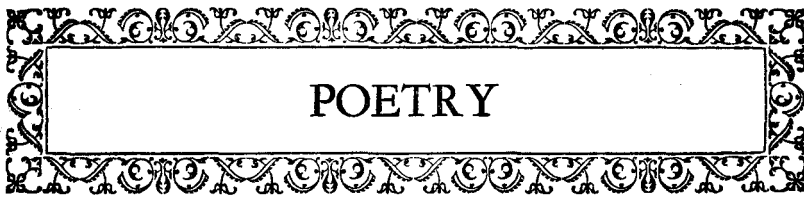
II

It is thus not in the least surprising that our equilibrium should be tenuous and unsteady, or that we should be possessed by a vague restlessness. All the old basic stuffs of existence—the making of fire, the hewing of wood, the drawing of water, and the rest—which once were the foundation-stones of human lives, have been taken away. We are without attachments, and bereft of those pivotal experiences around which the lives of our grandfathers were built and formed. In a very real sense we have almost forgotten that we are human beings—predatory, procreative, dung-dropping bipeds, no more exempt from natural law than badgers and no farther removed from earth than by the thickness of our shoe-soles. Only a tribe which had lost such simple

and obvious remembrances as these — and had retreated, as we have done, into an air-conditioned fantasy-world of intellectual abstractions — could now be subscribing so docilely to every moon-struck “ism” that comes along, or could now be permitting with so complacent an apathy the theft of its rights and liberties. Only a tribe that had long ago forgotten the elementary principles of cause and effect, and had come instead to theorize independently of the laws which govern all the primitive processes of creation, could now be approving the demented juggleries of national and international economy. Only a people who had forgotten the look in the eyes of a wounded fox, and the sound of the death-screams of a hare, could now be contemplating the butcheries of their own fellow-men with such cool disinterest.

The communicants of the Kremlin are positive, of course, that an enthusiastic embracement of the Marxian gospel will save us. Herr Hitler and Mussolini feel certain that we can be rescued from our present instability and befuddlement if only we will subscribe to the deification of the State. Mr. Roosevelt has an even simpler scheme for the procurement of Utopia. He thinks we can buy it.

Perhaps. And perhaps, again, none of these pat and ingenious projects is quite so sovereignly efficacious as its sponsors think. Perhaps, I would suggest, we are more likely to re-find our sanity and our sometime solid sensibleness by the thoughtful and judicious re-introduction into our too-civilized lives of certain very ancient sensations and experiences . . . the feel of a spade-handle against our palm, the smell of new-turned earth in our nostrils, the whistle of Winter wind in our ears. We are not apt, by such means, to stop the Spanish War over-night (as the Communists are sure Marxism would do), or raise all the workers' wages instantler (as the New Dealers are sure prosperity-by-purchase would do), but it is not impossible that we might effect a somewhat subtler and more spacious change. We might, that is, re-inculcate into our vaporous and theoretical thinking a few of the honest facts and sober actualities which led our grandfathers to hold firm and rationally-grounded convictions about life and about death, about work and property and responsibility and wages and rewards. We might, in a word, re-discover the age-old bases for the thing called common sense. It would be an achievement not wholly to be despised.



POETRY

THE BOAST

BY GLENN WARD DRESBACH

NO BETTER farm-hand could be found,
Each man agreed, and kept him long;
He was not one to look around
For easy work, and he was strong.

No one had need to come and call
When light was dim along the East,
For he was up — from Spring to Fall —
And he was kind to man and beast.

His appetite was not too great;
He never drank a drop nor swore;
He talked of crops — and watched his plate,
And hurried out again to chore.

He chewed tobacco with some care,
And sought no other woman when
His dull wife died, but took his share
Of work beyond three-score-and-ten.

He stopped with friends the other day,
For dinner, stout of back and arm,
Proud that the manager would say,
“The best hand at the County Farm!”

WIND GOING BY

BY LOUIS STODDARD

THE wind blows by like time in the field I hoe,
And I feel the spin of the earth, the rush of events,
All going by while my hoe chops, chops, chops,

Rhythmically, slowly, biting the roots of the grass
In the one small acre on top of the windy hill.

Wild strawberries ripen a field away. I feel them
Grow and ripen and rot. The bobolinks
Sing liquidly, nest and wheel to the south in flocks,
With numbers replenished; the human race, the curious
Thousands of people, stream by on the valley road
Under the mountain where I move hardly at all.

Change blows by me here. Only the sun moves
And warms my shoulders less than it did at noon.
The task is a pleasant one. It is good to know
My body is young and tireless against the task.
I move, a strong swimmer, in the flow of air
Between the blue above and the brown below,
My arms, over and over, flailing the wind
Effortlessly, the current flowing by.

AUTUMN RECESSIONAL

BY JOHN ROBERT QUINN

THE crimson days lie crumpled at my feet;
I walk through music now
That once hung high above the shady street,
Written on every bough.

The turtle-doves have bundled up their grief
And journeyed to some dawn
Where he who mourns is given back his leaf,
Where Summer lingers on.



THE LIBRARY

Catastrophe in Galveston

BY JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.

IT is remembered that the year 1900 opened auspiciously for the city of Galveston, pleasant in the sunlight, on the thin island athwart the Bay where the Trinity River empties into the Gulf of Mexico; and that it continued so throughout the summer. Certain controversial matters vexed the place not at all: it watched idly the debate as with which century, Nineteenth or Twentieth, the year 1900 should align: the Vatican said with the Nineteenth, until January 1, 1901; and the famed *Galveston News*, Nestor of Southwestern family-journals, sided with the Pope in Rome and lost no circulation thereby. Otherwise, the first halftone photographic reproduction in its history appeared in the *News*—a portrait of General Conje, lately captured by the British in the South African War. Queen Victoria was drawing to the end of her immense reign, and received occasional favorable comment in the American press: the

blameless McKinley was coming up for his second term: there was a trouble in the Philippines, and a far-off brawl in China: the Republic was turning imperialistic; and editorial opinion held widely for expansion and manifest destiny. Galveston itself pointed with pride to the Federal census, which gave it a population of 37,789 souls.

Those days it was the custom of gentlefolk from the up-country towns to summer at Galveston. The Gulf breeze cooled the city at night-fall; one of the most beautiful beaches in the world offered delightful surf-bathing; and you saw everybody there in the afternoons, bathing, promenading, or driving in carriages on the smooth, crisp sands. The ample Beach Hotel provided luxurious accommodations for the wealthy, and a score of lesser hostelrys invited the more prudent spenders. Bettison's Pier on the north jetty was an unrivaled fishing establishment: Murdock's Restaurant over the surf a splendid

place to eat, and to watch the waves. As to the city, it was lovely: its flat white buildings stood up from the water with the thin aspect of unreality; its streets were lined with oleanders; its lawns shaded by murmurous palm trees; its verandas deep, and draped with vines.

The summer season ended with the end of August, and most visitors returned inland. Some lingered, but not many: of these only a few noticed a brief dispatch regarding a West Indian hurricane moving northward over Cuba, in the *News* of the fourth of September, a Tuesday. But thereafter the alert Weather Bureau, in the Levy Building, posted bulletins every day. They were little considered. There is much hurricane lore along that coast, beginning with Cabeza de Vaca's account of the storm that cast him on the Island in 1521. Citizens recalled the last important storm, of 1872, which destroyed the old port of Indianola, down the coast: but that was nearly thirty years ago. In the 'Nineties certain apprehensive officials suggested a sea-wall, because the Island, thirty miles long, and little over a mile across at its widest, was only twelve feet above the tide marks at its rare high-spots, and generally lower:

they were considered visionaries and alarmists. Editorially the *News* held that the worst calamity imaginable, for Galveston and for the nation, lay in the remote possibility of Colonel Bryan's election to the Presidency.

On Thursday, the sixth of September, the Cuban storm, technically a tropical cyclone, had romped over southern Florida, and after the whimsical fashion of such disturbances, turned westward. The Federal weather authorities, ever cautious, hoisted warnings for a northwest storm. Next day, Friday, two inside-page dispatches reported storm damage to crops in Santa Clara Province. The Saturday morning issue of the *News* had a few sticks on page two, detailing crop-losses in Florida; the storm was then thought to be somewhere north of Key West.

. . . We spent that summer in Galveston, with my Grandfather, who lived in a little comfortable house about Twenty-first Street, north of Broadway. What I remember and what I have been told runs together for me; but I am sure of the big surf that piled in, on a steady southeast wind, through the last half of August, so that we had strict injunction against venturing beyond the first ropes on the beach. And all that

month the tides ranged high on the wharves: the southeast wind drove in the tides and held them; the Bay was brimming-full by the end of August. I remember also rains that swamped the rudimentary drainage system and sent water two feet deep along Broadway, wherein we waded joyfully in bathing suits, rain and water and air alike tropic-warm. We departed upstate, on schedule, the first of September, I very reluctant, looking back to the low white city from the mile-long wooden trestles of the railroad bridge. That city as it was I never saw again, nor some of the boys and girls I knew there. . . .

II

For next Saturday, the eighth, the storm was off the city: a great wind blew out of a livid, twilight-colored sky, and the surf boomed on the beach, each tremendous breaker reaching a little further up the sand. Very early the frail beach structures began to go. But Murdock's, and the Beach Hotel, high on massive pilings, had weathered many storms, and the unterrified citizens of Galveston had seen many gales of wind. Downtown they prepared for the Saturday business, ever brisk in the mercantile establishments and in the

saloons; and when it appeared that rain and wind were cutting into trade, the venturesome and gay went out by street-car and surrey to the beach, to marvel at the grandeur of the elements there displayed. The wind was furious from the north, blowing the spray off-shore, so that a man could keep his eyes open. . . .

Only, in the Weather Bureau, they watched the barometer sink to new lows, and noted the steady increase of the wind velocity on the weather-gauge: and when, at 10:10 A.M., the wind swung as a ship swings, from north to north-west, the men who knew the Law of Storms realized that a hurricane was centered on Galveston, and that an ordeal had begun. There is, about those vast convulsions of nature, an overtone of dread that communicates itself to all, whether they know the Law of Storms or not. In the *News* offices and in the Weather Bureau the telephones began to ring: what are we in for? The only answer was: get to high ground if you can. Prepare for the worst. . . . By noon, people downtown were thinking how to get home. They waded, they went in rowboats, they drove frightened horses: the wind was upwards of fifty miles an hour. Early in the afternoon the water began to come

over the wharves, bay water, a thing not remembered. Mid-afternoon, the island was everywhere covered, from one to five feet deep: the telegraph to the mainland went out with the rail and wagon bridges; the local telephone poles were coming down. The air was full of flying slate shingles, razor-edged, that killed people.

Still the rain fell and the wind mounted, and the surf stamped on the land: the grey afternoon faded into a howling darkness, and the darkness was an immensity of violence transcending human violence as the sound of it transcended human noise: people report they felt, rather than heard, a monstrous rhythm, wind and sea charging together. The wind came in lunges, swinging, after the fashion of hurricanes, through the successive quadrants. Under it Bay and Gulf joined hands, and struck in surges through the shrieking night, each mighty impulse armed with battering rams of wreckage. At 5:15 P.M., the anemometer atop the Levy Building registered ninety-six miles an hour, and carried away. Around eight o'clock, they estimate, the wind reached 110 to 120 miles an hour, and hauled from East to Southeast: it raised the Gulf in its arms and hurled it on the island.

This was the time of greatest destruction. People had struggled in from the beach, up from the inundated bayside, and collected in the strongest houses. Now these disintegrated. There was much horror in the dark.

My grandfather, a calm man, alone in his house on Twenty-first Street, had struggled home about mid-afternoon, done what he could for his neighbors, and battened down his doors and windows. By the light of a kerosene lamp he had observed the water come up through the floor from the basement, indicating a depth of more than twelve feet, and watched it rise inch by inch on the baseboard of his room, he sitting on the bed. Sometime after midnight, it ceased to rise. He considered that the storm was over, and went to sleep.

Sunday, the ninth of September, broke clear and fine. Bay and Gulf receded and were bland. But the seaward side of the city was swept clean and a great windrow of wreckage, almost in to Broadway, marked the last advance of the battering surges. The bayside was gutted by high water, much of it unroofed by wind. In between there was lesser devastation. The living sought remembered things and people and did not find them. Already looters were abroad.

Soldiers from Fort Crockett turned out and citizens' companies were put under arms. The wreckage disclosed matters unspeakable. Food and water were the first necessities: the hot sun brought another. It was days before communications were opened with the mainland, and that is a story too.

Our civilization had not advanced to the newsreel and the candid camera, and we are spared — except for a few smudged wet plates — the horrors survivors saw. The dead were computed at from 3000 to 5000 and sane estimates went higher for the area. It was hot, and they tried to burn the bodies, for you bury nothing in that fluid sand. Burning was too slow: they stacked the bloated things on barges and sent them out to sea: next morning the barge-loads were returned to the beach by the tides. No lists were kept, no identifications were possible. In loss of life alone it was, and I think stands, the greatest American disaster.

How the people of Galveston stood up, and rehabilitated themselves, and how, without Federal aid or kindred benefactions such as this generation enjoys, they raised the level of their island seventeen feet, and set a sea-wall around it, is elsewhere told. They

are a gallant people, and in 1915 they weathered a worse storm with little damage. Yet from 1900 they have not recovered. In forty years, their population has increased little more than 12,000; Houston and Dallas, neither as important at the turn of the century, now rise towards half a million each. The shipping lines and the railroads have gone inland, for money is afraid of tidal waves and nearly every other violent thing. Galveston is a resort and little more, but the oleanders still bloom there, and the people are gay on modest means, and the sea bathing is as good as any in the world. . . .

III

The foregoing is what I read, and what I remembered, reading, from Sam Acheson's *35,000 Days in Texas*.¹ It is the history of the *Dallas News* and its forbears, a story of some 340 pages, wherein the *News* is always the chief character. The father of the *News* would appear to be one Samuel Bangs, a Boston printer, who came to Galveston Island in Laffite's time, early enough to carry thereafter the suspicion of piracy. Through the next twenty years he

¹ *35,000 Days in Texas: A History of the Dallas News and Its Forbears*, by Sam Acheson. \$2.50. Macmillan.

adventured variously upon filibustering expeditions to Mexico and would have been shot for his pains had he not been a printer, and as such valuable to the Mexican *jefes*, with whom printers were rare. In April, 1839, he founded the *Daily Galvestonian*. In 1842, he set up the *Galveston News*—a puny four-page sheet from a hand-press. But his feeling was not for sustained journalism: he sold the *News*, and in 1843 it came into the hands of one William Richardson, also a New Englander. From that day to this, there has been no break in the continuity of one of the great institutions of the Southwest.

The story of the Institution is neither new nor especially popular with the annalists, yet surely no field offers richer material in the line of human endeavor and human aspiration. The reporter writes

in sand: his enthusiasm of today is dead as Hannibal tomorrow. But the reporter's medium is as enduring as life itself, because it is the record of life. And a continuity of editorial policy is a tool whereby events may be—it is hoped—made somehow significant. Or even directed. Surely the *Dallas News* has interpreted, and in a measure shaped, a hundred years of history in our Southwestern quadrant of States. On the foundations it helped to lay, an unpredictable future now takes form.

Mr. Acheson is as tender of his protagonist as though it were flesh and blood; but that is the way of biographers: they invariably develop a maternal complex. You suspect, also, a notable centennial celebration about year after next. But his book will instruct and amuse, and I recommend it.

THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from front advertising section)

MISCELLANEOUS

★★★★ UNTO CAESAR, by E. A. Voigt. \$3.00. Putnam. This book cannot be praised too highly as an analysis of the European situation from an enlightened British

Liberal viewpoint. The work of the Foreign Affairs Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, it is a masterpiece of hard thinking and brilliant writing, a rare combination. It is

a treat to read a clear-headed Liberal, even though one may at times disagree with him — a Liberal who scourges Hitler but recognizes him as the greatest man in the world today; who is hard-boiled enough to say that the Peace of Versailles was not severe enough on Germany and that nations should always fight for vital interests and never for principles; who sees the absurdity of sanctions and collective security; who is philosophic and scholarly enough to point out the religious, utopian, and millenarian character of Communism and National Socialism; who cherishes a Liberal's tastes and preferences and a realist's pessimism about human nature and national destiny. The book will offend tender Liberals and, of course, Communists, Nazis, and Fascists alike: and because of its pessimistic realism and lack of illusions, will doubtless fail to receive the praise from reviewers and the wide reading it so richly deserves. A first-rate performance.

★★★ **SAVE AMERICA FIRST**, by Jerome Frank. \$3.75. *Harpers*. This attempt to show how to make our Democracy work is by one of the brainiest New Dealers, Jerome Frank, a successful lawyer who is now one of the SEC commissioners. Whether his attempt succeeds may well be doubted, but where the book is devastatingly successful is in its assault on orthodox economic and political theory and on the Conservative holders of these quaint folk-beliefs. Mr. Frank believes that America, by a policy of intelligent isolationism and planned increase of consumer purchasing power can prosper while Europe stew in its own juice. He grants that the European nations, lacking our continental integration, cannot achieve planned abundance along isolationist lines, wherefore they must go on to war and collapse. But he has hopes for America because of his faith in human reason. That faith is about the only naïve idea in the book, but it is an idea which is basic to Mr. Frank's thesis. This super-rationalist reads the burial service over the

existing order, including its idea and behavior patterns. An even smarter rationalist can dispose of the Jerome Franks and Thurman Arnolds by the same rational methods. The logic of it all is that reason is instrumental and not normative, creative, or directive in human affairs. The final demonstration for this era that the emotions are paramount to the reason in creating values and the impulse to realize them, however, is likely to be made by the barbarians rather than by the logicians. The New Deal rationalists are making it easier for the barbarians in the final break-up by undermining the faiths, fallacies, and fetishes which hold together the present order.

★★★ **THE GOOD SOCIETY**, by Walter Lippmann. \$3.00. *Little, Brown*. The task, as indicated by the title, is much too ambitious. Mr. Lippmann is far and away our best columnist, but he is no Aristotle. The undertaking to present the definitive statement of Liberalism for this day and age calls for a thinker as well as a facile writer. Mr. Lippmann merely produces an angel-devil interpretation of current trends in which collectivism is the devil and the open, or free, market and the common law are the angels. His doctrine, that of modified *laissez-faire*, is contradicted by his agenda, and his methods have been proved hopelessly inadequate for doing the things he wants done by the public authority. The collectivism he berates is largely a verbal devil of his own creation. Thoughtful Liberals will concur with most of Mr. Lippmann's criticism of current trends but they will fail to find in his "Good Society" a satisfactory blue print of a Liberal utopia. Mr. Lippmann started out as a Socialist. Although he has dropped Socialism for Liberalism, he has remained a doctrinary.

★★★ **PITY THE PERSECUTOR**, by Julius Gordon. \$2.50. *Richard R. Smith*. A rabbi has no difficulty presenting the strong case against anti-Semitism or in identifying the

interests of all persecuted minorities with the interests of the Jews. Minorities, obviously, have a common interest in being tolerated and not persecuted. The minority group, however, is as much a social problem when it exerts minority-group pressure as when it becomes the victim of persecution. Democracy is menaced by what minority groups do and by what is done to them. Perhaps minorities would be no problem if things were as they should be: but one has to face the situation created by things as they are. The failure to discuss minority-group persecution in this context and as a social disease rather than as a social sin is the fault of most current literature on the subject.

★★★ WE TOO ARE THE PEOPLE, by Louise V. Armstrong. \$3.00. *Little, Brown*. A social worker in Government Relief writes a readable and highly instructive case-history book.

★★★ ACROSS THE FRONTIERS, by Sir Philip Gibbs. \$3.00. *Doubleday, Doran*. Recommended summer reading about the world crisis. More attention is paid to personalities and people than to ideologies. Point of view is that of the Conservative majority supporting the Chamberlain quest for peace by appeasement.

★★★ "AND SO THEY INDICTED ME!", by J. Edward Jones. \$2.00. *J. Edward Jones Publishing Corporation*. An extraordinary book. If it is true in every particular, it is one of the most amazing indictments of a government — the Roosevelt New Deal — ever written.

★★★ THE NOVEL IN CONTEMPORARY LIFE, by Storm Jameson. \$.75. *The Writer*. Miss Jameson, a novelist of strong and thoughtful mind, on what ails the modern novel. It amounts to this: the novel, like everything else in the world, must justify its existence by serving its day and generation, or it must die. Miss Jameson thinks —

and one must heartily agree — that the novel isn't doing very well just now.

★★★ WHAT A UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT HAS LEARNED, by A. Lawrence Lowell. \$1.75. *Macmillan*. The former president of Harvard epitomizes his conception of the meaning of education, academic freedom, and other subjects relating to supposedly higher learning. A Conservative, his criticisms are not as severe as those of President Hutchins of Chicago and some others. An excellent book for those interested in education, high or low.

★★★ HOLLAND: CROSS-ROADS OF THE ZUIDER ZEE, by Hendrik de Leeuw. \$3.00. *Lippincott*. A model for travel books; the Low Countries as you may visit them today against their historical background, from the people of the sea-marshes to Juliana's royal daughter. Bibliography and pleasant little illustrations.

★★★ FOREIGN AFFAIRS 1919-1937, by E. L. Hasluck. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. One of a growing number of workmanlike jobs supplying a factual groundwork for lay readers interested in world affairs. Point of view is British, Liberal, not extremely pro-sanctionist, and fairly objective.

★★★ JAPAN IN CHINA, by T. A. Bisson. \$3.00. *Macmillan*. An excellent statement of what the war in China is all about. Predicts the eventual triumph of China and the emancipation of the Japanese people from their present militarist masters, as a result of the debacle of the current Japanese adventure. The possibility that Japanese militarism may succeed in establishing war-making in China on a self-sustaining basis, largely at China's expense, and thus use it as a sort of permanent W. P. A. project for the solution of the unemployment problem merits more consideration and discussion than it currently receives. The writer of this study, who is a competent student of Far Eastern affairs, would have done well to

explore the possibility just mentioned. The general assumption seems to be that wars must end in a few years because the belligerents cannot bear the costs of their indefinite prolongation. How about the Hundred Years' War and other similarly-prolonged periods of more or less continuous fighting in the past?

★★★ DARE WE LOOK AHEAD?, by Bertrand Russell, Vernon Bartlett, G. D. H. Cole, Sir Stafford Cripps, Herbert Morrison, and Harold J. Laski. \$2.00. *Macmillan*. A stimulating symposium of the Whither-Whither? variety by a galaxy of brilliant British Left-Wingers. As might be expected, the best thinking is that of Earl Russell. The standard of writing, however, is uniformly high. Books of this sort provoke reflections on the paucity of equally brilliant Conservative intellectuals, both in Britain and America. The Conservatives, of course, have a far more numerous corps of brainy men, but most of them are too busy making money in the learned professions, or in business, to mold the thinking of their contemporaries with propaganda and ideas. These Left-Wing lookers-ahead are not particularly optimistic, for they are not of that extreme revolutionary type who see in social upheaval their big opportunity for revolutionary success. They are perhaps more worried over the outlook than the general run of Conservatives, largely because they see clearly the implications of current trends, whereas most Conservatives do not. These Left-Wingers are not prepared for the worst. They are desirous, though not very hopeful, of Socialism by gradual, peaceful, and Democratic change.

★★★ AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS, by John Mabry Matthews. \$4.00. *Appleton-Century*. This revised and enlarged edition of an excellent, and now standard, text-book is one of a number of competent competitors in the same field. It has the advantage of being more up-to-date than the others. Every lay student of

American foreign relations should read through at least one of these texts. In fact, such reading is essential to an understanding of most of today's headlines relating to American foreign relations.

★★★ BRITAIN AND THE DICTATORS, by R. W. Seton-Watson. \$3.50. *Macmillan*. This brilliant survey of post-War British policy by a British professor, written from a strongly Liberal, pro-League, pro-righteousness and idealistic viewpoint, is calculated to be a best seller. It has the facts and the arguments; in fact, everything those who share these views require in such a book. It ought to do as much toward bringing on the next war as anything recently published.

★★★ THE MARTYRDOM OF SPAIN, by Alfred Mendizabal. \$3.00. *Scribner's*. An attempt to relate dispassionately, and in a Christian and Liberal spirit, the story of the origins of the Spanish Civil War, by a Spanish professor who is a Catholic and a humanist. The analysis is not hard-minded enough for its subject matter. It deplores too much and explains too little; but, as a statement of the conditions which led up to the Civil War it merits careful reading.

★★★ NEWS OF ENGLAND, by Beverley Nichols. \$2.50. *Doubleday, Doran*. Short essays on things in or about present-day England which annoy one of its most authentic young critics. His criticisms will upset all sorts of readers, Americans as well as British, especially American Anglophiles. Conservatives and Communists will be equally offended. The best things about England are not those few things favorably noted by Mr. Nichols, such as its police and new ballet-masters, but the fact that England can produce, tolerate, and even pamper critics of such impudence and brilliance.

★★★ OLLA PODRIDA, by Elinor Burt. \$3.00. *Caxton Printers*. A well-chosen collection of cooking recipes from South and

Central America, conscientiously compiled. The most jaded homemaker will find here plenty of material with which to vary stagnant menus.

★★ BRASS TACKS, by A. G. Keller. \$2.00. *Alfred A. Knopf*. If you would like Ripley's "Believe It or Not" expanded into a book about all sorts of unrelated subjects of popular interest, you would enjoy this.

★★ POLITICAL GUIDE, by Dorothy Thompson. \$1.25. *Stackpole*. A study of American Liberalism and its relation to modern Totalitarian States. It is neither a guide nor a study but merely a collection of smart sayings tossed off by our premier newspaperwoman concerning practically everything important that is now on the public mind. Those who share her views—and their number is legion—owe her a great debt for expressing them better than they are capable of doing.

★★ YUKON VOYAGE, by Walter D. Curtin. \$3.50. *Caxton Printers*. Diary of a young man who made a voyage up the Yukon during the first years of the Klondike Rush. Simply, humorously written, it contains valuable material on the period it covers.

★★ METROPOLIS: A STUDY OF THE URBAN COMMUNITY, by Howard B. Woolston. \$2.75. *Appleton-Century*. City life as it has evolved during the past fifty years in America, with special emphasis on the effects of urban economy on the attitude and conduct of the urban citizen. Primarily a text, this supplements in many ways Lewis Mumford's *The Culture of Cities*.

★★ SHIPS AND SAILORS: THE STORY OF OUR MERCHANT MARINE, by William H. Clark. \$3.50. *Page*, Boston. This is a timely book. The development and decay of American shipping is set forth excellently and it is full of information, attractively presented. But the chapters dealing with current conditions do not mention, any-

where, the labor-aspect of the Marine problem—an omission of major proportions.

★★ LABOR'S ROAD TO PLENTY, by A. W. Rucker. \$2.50. *Page*, Boston. An earnest, though naïve, attempt to make an omelette without breaking any eggs. If the marketplace were not also a battlefield of conflicting interests, the suggestions might work.

★★ THE FUTURE OF FREEDOM, by Douglass Jerrold. \$2.50. *Sheed & Ward*. A Catholic approach to the solution of some of the major social and political questions of the day. That there is such an approach is news to most people, therefore books of this character deserve a wider reading than they receive in an age when so few are interested in Christianity or its answer to social questions.

★ ROOSEVELT, A STUDY IN FORTUNE AND POWER, by Emil Ludwig. \$3.00. *Viking Press*. A good biography—if you like Roosevelt and Ludwig. But if you like Roosevelt, why bother to read it? And if you like Ludwig, what are you doing reading *THE AMERICAN MERCURY*?

★ THE STAG AT EASE, by Marian Squire. \$2.00. *Caxton Printers*. One hundred males explain how their favorite food should be prepared—with varying degrees of facetiousness. You may enjoy learning that Walter Winchell likes Pot Roast, and that Lowell Thomas' camp specialty is Sweet Potatoes; but the odds are stronger that you will be made a little sick at the stomach by the publicity-posturing of that most pathetic of God's creatures—the New York "celebrity".

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND INDUSTRIAL CONFLICT, by Roger N. Baldwin and Clarence B. Randall. \$1.50. *Harvard University Press*. Four lectures delivered in April, 1938, at Harvard by two supposed authorities on, and reputed enthusiasts for, civil liberties in America. The same old stuff.

THE OPEN FORUM

MR. VARNEY ALSO ANSWERS MR. MENCKEN

DEAR MR. MENCKEN: Few words in the English language are more deceptively elastic than the word *liberty*. Hence, the attempt to imprison it in a definition which will be equally acceptable to libertarians, anti-libertarians, and imbeciles has always seemed to me to be a singularly profitless exercise. It is for this reason that I find myself in disagreement with your otherwise excellently-reasoned article in this issue, "The American Civil Liberties Union", when you announce your faith in abstract liberty. The Bill of Rights must apply to all men equally, "including the vast party of fools", you declare. Certainly this has not been the accepted American attitude. If it were, we should perforce open the doors of all our feeble-minded asylums, where vast numbers of our free-born *connazionali* are now being deprived of their civil liberties in the interest of the non-fool majority. Given congenital inequality among human beings, there can never be absolute and indiscriminate liberty for all, save at the cost of the destruction of the useful by the non-useful, the pillaging of the industrious by the unindustrious, the ruin of the intelligent by the imbeciles. This truth has always been recognized as elemental by freedom-lovers. True libertarians have always accepted the necessary and prior right of society to limit the activities of the anti-social in order to safeguard the liberty of the majority.

With this truism in mind, I cannot follow you in your apparent reading of the free-speech clause of the Bill of Rights as an absolute guarantee of free speech. Our founding fathers drafted this clause in the full recognition that the degree of freedom in any specific situation would be defined

by the courts. That such court interpretations of the free-speech clause have been wide in their latitude, and have closely conformed to the changing temper and politics of successive generations of Americans is a matter of record. It has been accepted American doctrine (challenged only by Communists and Anarchists) that freedom of speech shall not be so defined as to limit the right of the nation to protect and preserve itself in the face of seditious challenge. President Lincoln in his stern gagging of the Copperheads, and President Wilson in his mercilessly-enforced Espionage Act did not recognize that the Bill of Rights estopped them from such preservative limitation. Unlimited freedom for Communists, whose party is under the rigid discipline and direction of a foreign State (Soviet Russia), is inconsistent with American concepts of free speech. As Dr. John Dewey, himself an ardent Baldwinite, has declared, civil liberties are not realities apart from their "social basis and social justification". (*Social Frontier*, February, 1936.)

Likewise, I find it difficult to follow you when you declare that the ACLU is not responsible for the nature of the doctrines whose free speech it champions. This is assuming an Olympian detachment from bias which is notoriously rare among the gentry of the Left. In the latter section of your paper, you torpedo your own argument when you cite the proven partisanship of Messrs. Baldwin and Ward. In the actual world, men seldom, if ever, divorce abstract principles from regard for their consequences. The ACLU officers may argue that they demand free speech for Communists from a de-personalized con-

cern for liberty. Actually, unless they are ivory-tower dwellers, they know that in the present social temper such absolute freedom will result in the unleashing of class hatred and Russian interventions in American politics which may culminate in the ruin of our Republic.

In this matter, it is important to bear in mind that the ACLU exercises deliberate selection of the cases which it chooses to enter. A truly unpartisan body, it would seem, would avoid the imputation of Leftism by habitually selecting an equal number of Radical and of non-Radical actions, thus balancing its efforts. It is significant that such a balance has never been attempted by the Union. Mr. Baldwin's explanation is that such a policy would be impossible since there are a preponderant number of Communist civil-liberties cases. It is difficult to accept this excuse, or to believe that Mr. Baldwin searches very industriously outside the Radical field. For there is no dearth of non-Radical civil-liberties cases. Any large social-welfare agency can supply him with an appalling list. Unfortunately, such humble defendants give little promise of the headlines and the court-room histrionics which sweeten the task of defending Communists.

In this connection, I was amused to note the crackling defi which the ACLU threw out to you in its subjoined letter: "We challenge anyone to point out where we have failed to meet any important issue of civil liberty". One memorable case (certainly important) which seems to have missed the ACLU dragnet was the Liggett case in Minneapolis. In this instance, the intervention of the ACLU on Liggett's side would have embarrassed Governor Floyd Olson who was then the one outstanding "Progressive" who was co-operating with the Communist "Party Line". Mr. Baldwin apparently thought it best to preserve a discreet silence.

Let me now add another case which throws a curious light upon the apparent political motivation of ACLU

interventions. I refer to the Glenn Frank case in Wisconsin where a distinguished educator was summarily dismissed from his position because, as a Republican, he had incurred the displeasure of the State-House La Follette machine. Here was one "academic freedom" case where Mr. Baldwin was conspicuously silent. I wonder if he would have maintained the same taciturnity had the educator been a Stalinite and the Governor an Economic Royalist?

Moreover, since Mr. Baldwin seems to see nothing un-American in demanding unrestricted free speech for a Communist Party which serves Soviet Russia, I suggest that he contemplate an analogous organization — Mr. Fritz Kuhn's German-American Bund. If one believes in absolute free speech (as I do not), such freedom cannot be unilateral. While the Communists, thanks in part to ACLU help, may now meet openly nearly everywhere except in Mayor Hague's Jersey City, it is a notorious fact that Mr. Kuhn's shirted followers are denied free-speech rights in practically every city in the United States, under pressure of local committees which include many ACLU supporters.

Moreover, the reasons advanced for silencing Mr. Kuhn have been precisely the reasons which Mr. Baldwin has scorned when urged against the Communists: to wit, his apparent subservience to a foreign government.

I have yet to hear Mr. Baldwin issue a ringing denunciation of this interdict, although he has streamlined his record by one or two local gestures. If, as his letter indicates, he is sincerely eager to intervene in non-Communist cases "if he could find them", I am certain that a conference with the harassed Kuhn would give him enough litigation to keep the ACLU offices humming at capacity for many months.

So much for the ACLU claim of impartiality.

In taking leave of this discussion, let me state that, in my opinion, the role of the ACLU is central in the kind of Radical

movement we have in America. Without the aid of such ultra-respectable auxiliaries, American Marxism would be hopelessly mired in sectarianism. Marxism has always been rootless among the flesh-and-blood American proletarians. Such life as it possesses has been breathed into it by the heroization and the incessant publicizing which it has received from its "Liberal" admirers. Without such three-sheetsing, its preposterous leaders would long since have been laughed away by a sane-minded American people. The non-party Communist sympathizer cannot escape his responsibility for this effect. To the extent that the ACLU has lent its far-reaching powers to this hothousing of a non-indigenous American Communist movement, it has earned the censure of thousands of truth-regarding Americans.

HAROLD LORD VARNEY

New York City.

AND, SAYS MR. MENCKEN —

SIR: I observe that both parties to this controversy dissent sharply from my conclusions, and present powerful arguments against them. Having examined these arguments in an humble and prayerful spirit, I continue convinced that I am substantially right, and decline to change a word.

H. L. MENCKEN

*Baltimore,
Maryland.*



AN UNPOPULARITY CONTEST

SIR: Soon the season for selecting All-American football teams will be upon us. The 1938 Miss America has already been chosen. And popularity contests of every other description are under way throughout the Republic. I wish to suggest that THE MERCURY sponsor something that is much more needed than all these other affairs put together — an Unpopularity Contest.

We Americans are a long-suffering peo-

ple; but how we put up with the really appalling mess of stuffed-shirts, loud-mouthed phonics, crushing bores, Uplifters, martyrs, and other cheap celebrities whose words and doings are dinned into our ears and eyes daily by newspapers, radios, and movies is more than I can understand. The curse of publicity lies heavy on the land. So I suggest that we common people at least have the satisfaction of voting for the extermination (entirely unrealizable, unfortunately) of the worst pests who currently occupy our hair.

The Editors of THE MERCURY seem to be convinced that we are eventually going to be visited by a Revolution of some type or other — well, you can't have a successful Revolution without a list of the proscribed. I suggest that you ask your readers to vote for the names they think really belong on the ideal American proscription list. You can call this Nominations for Oblivion, Suggestions for Liquidation, or whatever you choose. But let us, your readers, by the Democratic process of voting, select the first ten Americans who we think should be consigned to oblivion. Or it might better be called The Worst Ten. The man (or woman) who ranks at the very head of the list could be called Public Pain-In-The-Neck Number 1. (This, considering the present competition, would be quite a distinguished title.)

I make only one qualification as a suggested rule for the contest. That is, that no one by the name of Roosevelt be admitted to nomination. Otherwise, the first ten would be filled up almost automatically.

To encourage your readers to send in their lists of The Worst Ten, I append mine herewith. And I will bet you a perfectly good hat that nobody can think up a better list than this one:

HEYWOOD BROWN

ELSA MAXWELL

HAROLD ICKES

WILLIAM E. BORAH

TOM MOONEY

BERNARR MACFADDEN

GERTRUDE STEIN
NORMAN BEL GEDDES
ADMIRAL RICHARD BYRD
WALTER DAMROSCH

How is that for a Worst Ten?

JAMES K. MACDONALD
Brooklyn, New York.

If you have never done any of these things and a million more of the same kind, what the hell do you know about teaching?

O. W. HOOP
*University of Tulsa,
Oklahoma.*



(Editor's Note: We think Mr. MacDonald's suggestion first-rate, and are glad to present it to our readers. We will undertake to print in the Open Forum the best lists of The Worst Ten submitted by readers, under the above rules, and will tabulate and publish each month the votes for the various men and women nominated, if they materialize. A year's subscription to THE MERCURY will be sent to the contributor sending in what is, in our opinion, the best list. And we will be glad to arrange for the transportation to Omsk, Siberia, of the gent who receives the most votes — if he wants to go.)



A PROFESSOR ANSWERS

SIR: I have just finished reading your article "Professors Have Soft Jobs". As usual with your articles it is written with vim, vigor, vitality, and inaccuracy. In defense of the college-teaching profession I want to ask you if you ever had to

A. Sit and listen while a dumb Dean tells you how to teach.

B. Laugh at the President's jokes — vintage 1890.

C. Eat your lunch in the college cafeteria, where you have to remove the half-back's feet from the table.

D. Associate on terms of equality with the hairy-necked coaching staff.

E. Listen to an irate oil man insisting that his pin-headed son's grade should be raised.

F. Dance the Polka with the Dean of Women.

G. Give an All-American guard a grade for two attendances in four months.

H. Listen to a Commencement Address.

THE JEWISH QUESTION

SIR: "For thousands of years," said Rabbi Stephen S. Wise in a recent discussion, "anti-Semitism has been a fact of history. Not only in the Germany of Herr Hitler but in the Egypt of the Pharaohs, in Babylon, in Spain, Poland, Russia, even in Palestine, oppression of the Jew is on record." Then Rabbi Wise argued that this oppression has always been unprovoked and unjust.

I have twice traveled through Palestine, from Dan to Beersheba, and have listened patiently to both the Moslem and Jewish sides of the controversy. The Zionist agents contended that the Moslems were a lazy, ignorant crowd of brigands who should be kicked across the Jordan; and with the help of the English, the Jews intended to do precisely that. But inasmuch as the Moslems are the real owners of Palestine and have been so for 6000 years or more, their spokesmen couldn't see why the Jews should be permitted to drive them out of their ancestral home.

Is Rabbi Wise familiar with the 47th chapter of Genesis? "The land of Egypt is before thee," said Pharaoh to Joseph. "In the best of the land make thy father and brethren dwell." Then follows a vivid description of how Joseph skinned the Egyptian farmers by a New Deal system of loaning money, reducing the poor *felaheen* to a WPA form of slavery. Later, however, the Egyptian farmer turned, having become pretty well fed up on aliens riding on his neck, and drove the whole tribe across the Red Sea.

If Rabbi Wise is looking for a warm

reception he might hop over to Budapest and complain of how the Hungarians "oppressed" Bela Kun and his precious gang. The Hungarians have reason to remember the reign of terror, assassination, and robbery inaugurated by Bela Kun, alias Cohen, as soon as he had induced a sufficient number of Hebrews from Russia and elsewhere to flock into Budapest. With their help Bela Kun murdered the Hungarian officials, seized the reins of government, and in 130 days squandered the total resources of the treasury. Or in lieu of a trip to Budapest, the rabbi might read *Quand Israel Est Roi*, by Jerome and Jean Tharaud. Their account agrees in the smallest detail with what government officials told me in Budapest of what happens "When Israel is King".

There are only 16,250,000 Jews in the world and 4,500,000 of them are in the United States. The Zionists speak of Palestine as the national Jewish home, but there are five times as many Moslems as Jews in Palestine. There are more Jews in either Massachusetts or New Jersey than in Palestine; twelve times as many in New York City as in the Holy Land. Forty per cent of the population of the Bronx is Jewish, 25 per cent of New York City as a whole. One in every twenty-eight of the population of the United States is a Jew; one in 130 in Germany.

Rabbi Wise says in effect that no country wants Jews. May that not be partly a resentment felt toward a people who frequently refuse to become out-and-out citizens of the countries they live in, and continue to assert the superiority of their culture and that they are God's chosen people? I have some very likable Jewish friends but not the kind that keep insisting on this divine set-apartness complex.

E. V. WILCOX

*Chevy Chase,
Maryland.*

SIR: Not since my mustang kicked the stuffins out of a bigot, and my Hitler bitch had a litter of pups, did I laugh so heartily

as over that crack-pot letter of *Real American* in the excellent August MERCURY. Some clever Jew or New Dealer must have taken him for a ride, or given him the bum's rush for incompetency, because the letter conveys crude ideals and cowardly insinuations. No one libeling his own Government can be a Real American and this one had best brush up on his ancestry and he will find he belongs to the Yellows. No genius needs to hide his light under a bushel, or use an alias when indulging in legitimate correspondence. Someone, charitably inclined, should scalp that Real American, or hand him over to the Aryans for a medal.

ARTHUR S. ROSENBERG

*Jamaica,
Long Island.*

SIR: Why the hell don't they deport guys like Matthews and the yellow-bellied guy who signed himself "A Real American"? I fought in the World War and then served four more years in Uncle Sam's Navy and I'm entitled to a say. I'm 100 per cent Irish, but I've never met better people than the Jews. I've fought side by side with them in France and served in the fireroom of tin cans, battle wagons, and sub chasers with them. I say deport every Nazi stinker who opens his mouth about this country and everyone like Matthews and the louse who didn't have guts enough to sign his name but stole "A Real American". If he will sign his address I'll give him a sample of how a "Real American" talks by going to see him.

CARSON O'MALLEY

*Baltimore,
Maryland.*

SIR: Arthur Anselme Nerson's reply to Rives Matthews on the Jewish problem in the August MERCURY wherein he assumes that the Crucifixion of Christ has a great bearing on the feeling which Christians have against the Jews is an error. Anti-Semitism is not caused by religion; it is

purely racial, due to traits of which all Jews are suspected. In the opinion of other races, the Jews have different moral and business ethics—for example they are blamed for the degeneracy shown by our movies, since the majority of the large film concerns are controlled by Jews.

The Jew in this country has also been hurt by the large influx of low-caste Jews who have swarmed across our borders, not to earn their living toiling like other races, but to swarm to cities to live by trade. Mr. Nerson gives the example of a young Jew whose parents and grandparents were born in the United States and had been good Republicans or Democrats, but had they been good Americans? That is the whole question. Why did not Mr. Goodman want to associate with the family friends? There must have been some reason. Of course there are non-Jewish aliens (far too many of them) in these United States who have undesirable habits, and yet Americans are quick to recognize that they only represent a small minority of their countrymen. But the Jew is not a hard worker in the same sense; he is a parasite who prefers to trade on the weaknesses of other races and make his money by barter and trade.

I am of English descent, but it does not make me want to declare war or rush into print if Germany or any other nation kills or maltreats an Englishman; but if a Jew is hurt in France or Liberia or anywhere else, American Jews want to declare a war or a boycott. In other words they are not Americans but Jews.

SENEX

New York City.

SIR: As to your articles on Jews let me tell you a story and point a moral. I once knew a little woman who had been married and divorced twelve times. At each divorce she recited her woes. No woman could live with that man, she always averred, he mistreated her, persecuted her—he was always wrong. About the time she got her twelfth divorce, however, people began looking

into her troubles. Surely, they said, twelve men could not all be wrong. And they agreed that it must have been the little woman who was wrong all the time.

So it is with the Jews. They have lived in twelve countries and more, and on departing have invariably been loud in denunciation of their hosts. The Jews were always right, they insisted, the hosts were always wrong. Now does it not seem reasonable to believe that there is something basically wrong with Jews after all? Yes, I fear there is.

The whole trouble with Jews is this: they will not assimilate. They are a small race, a very old race. No proud race of men wants to become extinct, and that is exactly what would happen in a few generations if Jews assimilated. *But!* If the Jews imagine they can live among Gentiles as a race apart, they are letting themselves in for a horrible awakening sooner or later. These strange Oriental people have an insane streak in their make-up—an abnormality which seems absolutely unaccountable. They cannot be made to see their faults; they cannot admit that a Jew is ever wrong in anything.

OLD ARKANSAS

*Little Rock,
Arkansas.*

~

PLAN FOR A SLAVE-STATE

SIR: In the July *MERCURY*, John W. Thomason, Jr., makes a remark which is worthy of considerable pondering. "It is a sad paradox," he says, "that the principle of States Rights, which created the Confederacy, made it impossible for it to form a united front, even in its battle for existence." The point, I take it, is just this: that if the *principle* behind any movement is *merely* dispersive or "individualistic," this very fact will prevent men from taking effective action in its behalf.

There are some of us who sympathize with *THE MERCURY*'s assaults upon the cor-

rupt and aimless Socialism of the New Deal; but at the same time feel the lack, in its pages, of any fundamentally positive point of view. Mr. Thomason's remark brings this criticism to a clear focus. The only social philosophy we can find in *THE MERCURY* is the old, abstract, 18th-century individualism (garnished occasionally with hard-boiled Spencerian biology); and *this* philosophy seems to us hopelessly unrealistic, for the reason indicated above. The Liberal-Democratic State is everywhere on the defensive today, precisely because of its inability to bind men together in pursuit of a common goal. This inability resulted directly from the individualistic principle upon which that Liberal State was founded. Yet you have nothing better to suggest than a return to this principle!

A social philosophy, in order to be effective, must be formulated beforehand. If *THE MERCURY*, beside criticizing the current trend toward collectivism and the "Slave State", could also become critical of the basic ideas and attitudes which provoked this trend, it might contribute something essential to American thought — or even to the thought and life of Western man, whose very existence is now at stake.

R. W. BRETALL

*Evanston,
Illinois.*

~

MORE CHASTITY ARGUMENTS

SIR: Sex will be handled properly in some far distant day. The man or the woman who craves coition will have it gratified in a decent and wholesome way, as a matter of course. It is a call that ought to be considered as necessary as eating and sleeping. But the prudes openly deplore (while secretly wishing for the opposite) any way or method by which it may be obtained. The most pitiful human being in the world is the normal man or woman who is denied nature's most necessary urge. To me the whole sex act is sacred and beauti-

ful, and would be so considered by all were it not for the prudes.

ERNEST LEAVERTON

*Grand Junction,
Colorado.*

SIR: Lately the subject of chastity has been taken up in *THE MERCURY*. One article, written by a college girl, is so entirely devoid of all shame that I cannot avoid thinking that this dissolute girl has greatly over-estimated the facts and grievously libeled her fellow schoolmates as a whole. Of course there are unprincipled girls everywhere, just as there are wild and immoral boys. But I, who, as an old physician, have seen something of the private lives of many families have had a better opinion of our young people.

When the campaign for repeal was on we were told that our colleges were breeding places for carousals and intemperance among our *boys*. Now comes a "co-ed" with testimony from the inner circles that the girls in those high institutions of learning — our future wives and mothers — are abandoning themselves to pleasure, sensuality, and moral uncleanness.

I hope this very imprudent, shameless and misled girl will change her ways and if she does I trust she may eventually get a good, clean man for a husband and enjoy a long and happy life and have lovely children.

OLD DOC

*Franklinville,
New York.*

SIR: I have just read "Chastity on the Campus" and it seems to me that this article may do considerable harm — not to people with brains but to those young people who do things unthinkingly. Of course any intelligent person could take each point in the article and show how false it is. This girl is undoubtedly trying to condone her own loose way of living. Personally I have more respect for her sisters who make a living by plying their trade in the segre-

gated districts. Of course it isn't necessary for *me* to chastise the girl — Life will knock her ears down soon enough — poor fool.

MRS. A. S. WORKMAN

*Glenwood,
Iowa.*

SIR: In his remarks about "Chastity on the Campus", your correspondent, W. L. Andrews, asks "... what would Jesus Christ ... think about it?" May I inform him that I am happy to represent the Gentleman to Whom he refers and I can say authoritatively that the Gentleman agrees with John Milton, in his *Areopagitica*, that "the knowledge cannot defile ... if the will and conscience be not defiled. ... Bad books to a discreet and judicious reader serve in many respects to discover, to confute, to forewarn, and to illustrate. ... Since ... the knowledge and survey of vice is in this world so necessary to the constituting of human virtue, and the scanning of error to the confirmation of truth, how can we more safely, and with less danger, scout into the regions of sin and falsity, than by reading all manner of tractates, and hearing all manner of reason?"

The Lord also agrees with Paul: "To the pure, all things are pure; ... Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

JULIAN MAGAREY BARCLAY

*Bethany,
West Virginia.*

THE MAINE REMEMBERED

SIR: Mr. Gilligan's graphic article on the destruction of the *Maine* in the May MERCURY omits an interesting point. It is not surprising that he does, since all other writers on the subject, with the exception of Admiral Chadwick, who sat on the Court of Inquiry, have also overlooked it; and it seems to have received no attention whatever from the contemporary papers. The point is this: on the night of the ship's destruction, there was a highly-unusual set

of the currents in Havana harbor. The *Maine*, swinging from the mooring buoy on a rather long chain, was carried round into a position — and the only position — from which all the guns in her battery would enfilade the cannon on shore without the latter being able to reply effectively.

The matter has perhaps no significance; but if there were any military engineers in the Spanish mining service, and if they had planted any mines in the harbor, they would certainly have placed one or more at the exact spot where the American warship was blown up.

FLETCHER PRATT

New York City.

ORCHIDS

SIR: I am a WPA Democrat. I have just finished reading THE MERCURY for July. And I wish to say that it is despicable. The lousy propaganda articles are what I call Yellow Journalism. Who finances your book? Is it Wall Street? Or maybe the Republicans. That Channing Pollock guy, where did you pick him up? I actually pity him. The biggest two-faced liar this side of Hoover and Hearst. I hate to waste ink on such a lousy outfit. I just want to remind you that F.D.R. is No. 1 Boy in this country today. Right or wrong, he is still O.K. I am afraid you "Patriotic American Grafters" will have to put up with him for a third term.

FROM A "REBEL HAVE-NOT"

*Seattle,
Washington.*

SIR: Your beautiful little magazine is one of the wisest and wittiest and sanest things this world has to give us.

R. F. COOKE

*Camden Town,
England.*

SIR: Your magazine showed its yellow color a little too vividly in its current issue

by publishing the tripe of T. Harry Thompson. The slop of advertising-man Thompson indicates quite clearly that both he and you make the brain-power of a gnat stand in formidable contrast. After my sophomore year in college I believed that your publication belonged with *Spicy Stories*, the Little Blue Books, and the muscle-brained literature of Bernarr Macfadden. Now I know that my opinion was not incorrect.

W. R. EISELT

*Hammond,
Indiana.*

SIR: The July MERCURY should lead every American citizen to thank God that the freedom of the American press has not yet been of the American press has not on "When America Marches to War", "Two-Thirds of a Nation", "So I Joined the Union", etc., should be placed in the hands of every American citizen to make him realize where the present Administration is leading us. I have purchased several copies, underlined the more salient parts of the articles in question, and insisted that my friends read them and write to their congressmen and senators. Probably thousands of other American citizens are doing the same thing.

When one takes into account that some twenty-five million people are now directly or indirectly being supported by government salaries, PWA, and whatnot, one fears that the balance of the power has shifted to the unthinking mass who are used as pawns in the creation of a totalitarian state. The fact that a totalitarian state will hurt them as much as anyone else is not a useful argument in changing their votes, unless they can be made to realize this fact. Is there no way we can — not only your magazine but the press generally — educate the people about what is being done to them, before it is forever too late?

C. C. WHITTAKER

*Hammond,
Indiana.*

SIR: The August issue is swell. Don't you dare go broke; if you ever come close, send for some Moscow gold — everybody else gets it! Keep up your good work — right or wrong (Left), I love you!

S. A. K.

*Detroit,
Michigan.*

SIR: Your article in the July issue, "When America Marches to War" is a simon-pure example of Soviet propaganda. This writer has no objection to reading Red views; but they should be objective in nature, not mere emotional propaganda.

PHILIP F. SHERIDAN

*Cincinnati,
Ohio.*



ELECTION BALLAD

SIR: Here is a bit of "Poetry" for the Open Forum:

ELECTION DAY IN THE MADHOUSE

'Twas Election Day in the Madhouse;
All the inmates swarmed around
With giggles and gurgles and burbles,
A Babel of babbling sound.

Each guy with a wheelbarrow up-side-down,

Each egg who would rest upon toast,
Each Napoleon and each Caesar
Felt fitted to rule the host.

But one rose up amongst them there
Whom we used to call "F.D.",
Who'd changed initials to plain "D.F.",
For a reason that's plain to see.

Then they howled with maniac laugh and glee,

As they whooped with mad acclaim
For the poor D.F. with the radio voice
Who had honestly changed his name.

He arose in his Democratic might
And demanded a kingly crown,
As the rightful ruler of frenzied fools
For cutting the good corn down.

He said: "My friends, I've sterilized gold,
And I've cut your old dollar in half;
I've gypped our creditors, wrecked your
land,
With a smile and a hearty laugh.

I've slaughtered your cattle and little pigs;
I've plowed your cotton crop under;
I've raised MY masses against the classes;
I've made every possible blunder.

I've run in a circle, just chasing my tail
Like any disorganized pup;
By fiat Fascistic, my laws Communistic
Have used all the alphabet up.

I'm right where I started, but DON'T be
downhearted;
Though I've left you in oceans of debt.
I'll just print you some money — and isn't
it funny —
The elephant's learned to forget.

The People are crazy; I've made 'em all
lazy;
The workers are shirkers today;
They're loafing in parks reading books by
Karl Marx.
Now it's 'FRANKLIN FOREVER —
HOORAY!'

So — for raising prices to stimulate sales
And a million of jack-ass tricks,
They gibbered and drooled as they chose
"D.F."

The Czar of the Lunatics.

LAMBERT FAIRCHILD

New York City.



TWO-THIRDS OF A NATION

SIR: In his article "Two-Thirds of a Nation", Channing Pollock makes the

statement that "the government has taken 80 per cent of the wholesale price of gasoline". His article deals with the United States Government, so I assume he refers to the Federal Gasoline Tax. The Federal tax is 1¢ per gallon. The ex-tax wholesale price of first-grade gasoline in tank cars f.o.b. is as follows: Portland, Me., 8¢ per gallon; Portland, Ore., 9¢ per gallon; Mobile, Ala., 7¢ per gallon; and Port Arthur, Texas, refineries \$0.04375. If Mr. Pollock was thinking of the State tax, this varies from 2¢ per gallon in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Missouri, to 7¢ in Tennessee. I am unable to check the 80 per cent figure given by Mr. Pollock by any method in current use.

Assuming that he intended his article to be taken seriously, I am sure Mr. Pollock will not resent a suggestion that one off-hand and ill-considered statement of this kind in an otherwise unimpeachable group of statements may lead a reader to suspect the accuracy of the others.

A. H. DWINNELL

*The Texas Company,
Seattle,
Washington.*

MR. POLLOCK REPLIES

SIR: Replying to A. H. Dwinnell, of the Texas Company, who regards my statement that "the government has taken 80 per cent of the wholesale price of gasoline" as "ill-considered", *this statement was taken almost verbatim from a leaflet published by the Texas Company*, and enclosed with its annual report for 1936. The leaflet declares, "State and Federal Governments will 'touch' you for thirty-eight cents for every dollar you spend for gasoline. That 38 per cent is the tax on the retail price, but the tax is equivalent to over 80 per cent of the wholesale price." If these figures are "ill-considered", therefore, the fault is that of Mr. Dwinnell's own company.

CHANNING POLLOCK

*Shoreham,
Long Island.*

SIR: Channing Pollock's venomously subtle "Two-Thirds of a Nation" simply confirms my somewhat latent suspicion that as a writer on political affairs he is a first-rate playwright. Some of the readers of *THE MERCURY* will eat his stuff whole, but it will certainly be resented by those who have more than "two-thirds of a brain".

So Mr. Pollock has been around a great deal, has he? And he has been talking to and with "doctors, lawyers, merchants, chiefs" in 123 cities and towns and he has found that they are all simply *worried to death*? Did he ever talk with taxi-drivers, gas-monkeys, grease-balls, gandy-dancers, soda-jerkers, well-drillers, waiters, pearl-divers, bindle-stiffs, nut-knockers, or plow-jockeys? No, I reckon not. He'd rather get the stuffed-shirt slant. Two-thirds of the workers of this nation are just as responsible as your doctors, lawyers, merchants, chiefs, and they aren't worried.

Of course Roosevelt has made a lot of mistakes. What President hasn't? He has spent lots of money, but it hasn't all gone up the flue. Much of it has gone for things that will come back to us in something much more valuable to our civilization than gold. And did Mr. Pollock ever stop to think that with all this "wild spending", this Administration has not yet spent as much as we did in the World War? We voted twenty-five billions out of the Treasury without batting an eye, when we at last decided that we weren't too proud to fight—and for what? It didn't make the world safe for democracy.

Mr. Pollock can't get the whole picture by visiting with doctors, lawyers, merchants, chiefs and those dear fellows with whom he went to Princeton (or was it Yale?). Before he can see even half of this great panorama, he will have to get outside the club once in a while. Above all, he must get away from the bunch of squawkers he sets up as criterions in his article. Good God, what kind of people does Mr. Pollock know?

No, Mr. Pollock, two-thirds of the "re-

sponsible inhabitants" are *not worried*, but more than two-thirds of the plutocrats are, and so are more than two-thirds of the gyp-artists who used to jack-roll the suckers so easily. And are they squawking their lungs out! When it was a cinch to take the widows and orphans, everything was jake; but now that their license to steal has been revoked and the going is a little rough, they are the first to holler "copper". And Goddlemighty, how they can holler!

REX GAY

*Evanston,
Illinois.*

SIR: I have just read "Two-Thirds of a Nation". It is the strongest article I have ever read and touches the very quick of our national feelings. It shows that the confusion and fear of the people are created by the craftiness and distortions of politicians who, ordered by the money-power, make things so complicated that it is impossible for the average person to understand what is being done to him, and step by step the people become stupefied. If they could only realize that they are being ground between the millstones of two gangs of racketeers—the money trust and the politicians—they would know better how to extricate themselves. The people should understand that there is no money in the U.S. Treasury—only red ink, and that it is because of these colossal debts that they are to be enslaved. Government help, which is like swill poured into the trough for hogs, can never put them on their feet, rather it will knock everything from under them and they'll fall supinely, never to rise again. Their subjection will be complete.

There are those in the Open Forum who complain that *THE MERCURY* criticizes, but gives no plan to correct the evils now rampant. I say to those people that we don't need a plan—there are already too many plans, which have caused all the mischief. What we need is a people who can WAKE UP AND THINK. The people of this coun-

try should have the discernment to see that the only way to have prosperity and security is for the government to keep its hands off other people's business. It's not the function of government to loan money, nor to control or direct the people, but to be their servant and to protect them from injustices. The less government we have, the more abundance and the greater security we have.

MARGUERITE CUMMINGS

*San Diego,
California.*

SIR: Channing Pollock's "Two-Thirds of a Nation" should be ashamed of themselves for their indecent, vapid whisperings and their old-maidish scandal-mongering. The three Pollock virtues "ability, industry, and thrift", apparently leave no room for the ordinary amenities and decencies of life. Are we to believe that the people who really "matter" have sunk to such a low estate? Where are they? Certainly not here on the Pacific Coast, where the clean winds of the world sweep over us from morning to night.

HARRY L. MOODY

*South Tacoma,
Washington.*

A CONFESSION

SIR: I am a Communist.

I am too darn lazy to be anything else. I have discovered, like thousands of other young people, that you don't have to be good-looking, brainy, or industrious to get some place. All you have to say is, "I am loving Stalin" once a day and quote Karl Marx twice a month. In school I broke all the rules, wrote Radical themes (they are much easier to write than the orthodox), made the school paper gossip-columns regularly, and got away with everything. Once or twice I did some very passionate soap-box oratory and converted many of my fellow-students to The Cause (about which I know practically nothing).

Thanks to THE MERCURY and other peri-

odicals concerned with us, we have become fascinatingly dangerous to the general public. And we love it. But if anyone were to laugh at me and make fun of my Communist leanings, I would quickly revert into the staunch Republican that I really am.

If you don't want Communists, take the glamour out of Communism.

A COMRADE

*Marshalltown,
Iowa.*

FDR DEPARTMENT

SIR: There is certainly method in the madness of our vulgar boatman, Comrade Browder, in issuing orders to the Comrades to wash behind the ears, tone down the red, and get the old soup and fish de-spotted. In other words to go sassiety. Y'see, various little expressions of that friend of the "dear peepul" — Fiddledee D. Roosevelt make it plain that he is as much a maverick in the eyes of the Soviet as he is in the eyes of the Roosevelts Ltd. His monotonous repetition of his belief in private ownership and the capitalistic system, coupled with his constant cravings for concentration of power in his hands alone, tells Comrade Browder that this game of freeze-out is being played with jacks wild — he being one of the jacks — and that when the hand is played out Fascism, not Communism, will take the pot. Browder knows a stacked deck (even if it's a New Deal) when he sees one — he plays with Stalin.

In the past, Browder made the same mistake that the American proletariat is making — that of thinking that Fiddledee D. is "one of us". Nothing could be further from the truth — by heredity, birth, environment, training, and inclination he is an aristocrat. In every speech he has made since '32, in every Fear-side Chat he has talked down to the people, as one would talk to ten year old kids — to his "subjects" not to his "equals". He knows the American proletariat can not run this country, should not have the opportunity to try, and

as far as he is concerned will never get the chance.

So Browder figgers his best bet is to bore-in on the Inner-Borers—the Fascistic group surrounding “Fiddledee D.”, and in order to do so—bingo, wash up first! Browder knows that sooner or later he is going to have to pit the masses against Fascistic rule. He knows now that he must discredit the present administration or a similar succeeding one eventually if Communism is to win. So he plays to stay close to the scene of action.

Now—I’ve seen many letters in the Open Forum giving THE MERCURY hell, praise, condemnation, and congratulations for being the foremost Fascistic cur, hero, traitor, and patriot in America. But I’ve got a sneaking hunch that you-all are more of an “aginner” than anything else. You’re “agin” this bizzness of closing up the old American Testament of 312 years, discrediting the old prophets, repealing the old standards of honor and morality, and discarding the knowledge gained by old experiences to start a New (Deal) Testament with a tin Josh-ua. I propose then—that you and I keep the two great levelers (downward) fighting like hell and while they fight and while the referee—Fiddledee D.—stays busy in their squabble, Democracy can recuperate from the weird experience with the “Old Man of the Sea”—F.D.R. After all, the fight is not Democracy versus Fascism—Communism—it is Democracy versus Rooseveltism, sired by Ego-tism and damned by Americans.

WARREN T. HANLEY

*Santa Barbara,
California.*

SIR: Channing Pollock asserts that two-thirds of the nation both *fear and hate* Roosevelt, yet the President could be re-elected tomorrow. Which is, of course, an interesting paradox. Fear is the chief emotion which Mr. Roosevelt inspires in the majority of his fellow-Americans, including his own supporters. But fear is by no

means synonymous with hate, nor do we of necessity hate that which we fear. To imply that men will vote for one they hate is fantastic. Fear and votes, yes. Hate and votes, never.

Now, for years I have insisted that it is impossible to hate Mr. Roosevelt. Hate him? How can you hate a clown, a low form of politician with a showman’s bag of tricks? Why, to the discerning the man is a gift from the gods of humor, irony, and satire. I daresay he has afforded more bellyshaking guffaws to more people than any crackpot since William Jennings Bryan or the immortal Teddy himself. To concoct a hate myth or legend about a braying jack-ass is simply to dignify that which was never meant to be taken seriously. And that is the chief trouble. Here we have the most hilarious comedian in the history of American politics—a natural. And what do we do? We take him seriously. We turn him into a hero and an idol. A tragedy, no less. But you might as well try to hate Charlie McCarthy as Franklin Roosevelt. Fear him, you must. Despise him, you may. Hate him, you cannot.

J. E. FULLER

*Minneapolis,
Minnesota.*

SIR: I hardly expect to see this in the Forum section of your magazine, because I am on “the other side”. Perhaps I am a “fool or knave” to believe in Rooseveltian doctrines, but surely our President is not such a super-hypnotist that he can keep so many Americans under his “evil spell”. Criticize him if you will, but please—why be so dogmatic as to place all who disagree with you in a class as morons. If your writers are so all-wise as to read destruction of Americanism in *all* New Deal policies, surely their wisdom could also produce at least suggestive solution. I do not approve all the New Deal policies,—who does—but the philosophy is sound. Wake up to that. If the methods are wrong, you could aid your country more by suggesting new methods.

I suggest a better title for your interesting magazine — "American Dogmatist".

KEN MADDOX

*Crestwood,
Kentucky.*

SIR: What a horrible mess a nation of 130,000,000 souls has been led into by Roosevelt and his army of free-booters. It is painfully evident from the popularity of the Fireside Chats that fully ninety-nine per cent of the people are responsive to rhetoric but incapable of logical thought. They still live under the impression that they are enjoying liberties denied to the citizens of all other countries, particularly those nations suspected of being tainted with Fascism; when, as a matter of fact, the citizen of the United States is more restricted in his liberties and his political masters have a tighter grip upon his life and fortunes than in any other country except Soviet Russia. Roosevelt is today the most powerful Dictator (again with the possible exception of Russia) on earth, and all this horseplay about saving the Supreme Court and beating him on the Re-organization plan is pure bunk, for in no single instance has he failed to gain what he desired. With the huge slush fund which he has demanded and will receive there is no possibility of the decent minority ever breaking his iron grip upon the nation.

ROYAL P. JARVIS

*El Oro,
Mexico.*

SIR: There appears to be no question about the President's motives and objectives continuing to be identical with those he had in the back of his mind when he said: "I will either be the best President or the last President", or words that spelled just that. Republican leaders have apparently, taken his words concerning his objectives too seriously. They should cease to be tolerant of the New Deal and its only beneficiaries — F.D.R. and his bureaucratic legions. It was a grievous mistake two years

ago and must not be repeated in this campaign nor hereafter. Intolerance is the law in politics. It must be!

CHARLES J. LAVERY

*Aberdeen,
South Dakota.*

SIR: In more than two years of personal observations and investigation the writer has procured most authentic evidence, which we have long since submitted to Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry L. Hopkins, showing the WPA to be the most disgraceful political racket ever known in American history, especially in California. At least two candidates for Governor, and one for the United States Senate, in California are being indirectly financed by WPA. Yet the only results of the evidence submitted to Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Hopkins is that the communications have been forwarded to those accused.

Here in California are thousands of American citizens who are in desperate need but who are unable to procure work on the WPA, while many score who do not need assistance are on the rolls, doing nothing constructive or necessary — and are either on the City, County, or State pay-rolls also. Now, if our interpretation is correct, the WPA is the most gigantic political racket yet conceived by man.

Those who read this will naturally jump at the conclusion that the writer is a Republican. Therefore I wish to state that I have been Democrat for fifty-eight years, but when a President tours the nation with a perpetual, silly grin, diplomatically intimidating voters to re-elect his picked rubber stamps then I refuse to remain whipped in line.

GARNER D. WHITE

*Los Angeles,
California.*

SIR: Shame on us as Christians and American citizens, for saying, (or even thinking) it, but we do confess a huge distaste, and a hatred for the whole cheap

Roosevelt family! The occupancy of the White House by this troupe of mountebanks, is going to make necessary, in 1940, a fumigation of the severest order. You, and your contributors are on the right track, and we hope you *stay right there*, regardless of income-tax, Spy, naval, and other undercover assaults on you by New Deal-payrollers! You'll get these undercover attacks, (probably you have received some already), all Americans owning insurance-policies, or of Republican extraction, etc., have suffered since 1932.

A. G. GUYSON

Newport News,
Virginia.



AMERICAN YOUTH

SIR: "Three Ring Circus for Morons", was a more than usually accurate picture of American high schools. Being a student, I feel qualified to say. However, in "The Left Kidnaps American Youth", Harold Lord Varney refers to "sane-minded American youth". In other articles, periodicals, and statements by American leaders, one reads of the "thinking youth" who are to-day seeking a way out of their problems. This hoax of a "thinking youth" population needs clearing up.

I would divide the high-school population of this country into four classes:

The average. Those would never think. If there are jobs for them when they graduate, they will turn into good salesmen and mechanics. They have an average good time in high school, are the backbone of the nation.

The hell-raisers. They are not interested in problems. They are the ones who are swing-mad, and who drink. They are also the ones who cause the low percentage of virginity in American youth.

The brilliant. These are a mixture of the second and fourth groups, and very small in number. They drink, sometimes more than the number two group. They think, but are usually too cynical to join any

"youth" movement. From this group will come this generation's failures and geniuses.

The thinkers. These, a small group, are the ones we hear about. They are interested in world affairs, but judging from their voices, unable to understand them. They are either very Leftist, Liberal, or Conservative. Perhaps "thinkers" is a misnomer. "Talkers" would be better.

I am a high school student, but I have no faith in youth. I would rather that the country in which I live be governed by middle-aged and older men, with experience and knowledge. Youth, in America at least, has neither.

HARRY T. REASONER

Minneapolis,
Minnesota.



MR. CRAM'S HUMAN BEINGS

SIR: Your reprint in the August MERCURY of Ralph Adams Cram's "Why We Do Not Behave Like Human Beings", only serves to prove its value. About two years ago Albert Jay Nock contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly* an article "In Quest of the Missing Link", and called attention to Mr. Cram's article. I had a casual recollection of the piece, and was pleased when I was able to find it. In my opinion, a reprint of Mr. Nock's thesis, arguing that we do not behave like human beings simply because humanity, in the mass, is merely the material out of which individual human beings of merit are evolved, would be in order.

NORMAN R. PRICE (M.D.)

Marlinton,
West Virginia.

SIR: After reading through "Why We Do Not Behave Like Human Beings" I began to reflect on what I had learned from this allegedly-erudite article. The conclusion one is drawn from the whole thing is that the ordinary man in the street of successive generations is not as bright or creative as the genius of the age. Which has always been a perfectly obvious fact.

The author is no doubt right in insisting that people should not regard themselves as superior to their ancestors on the strength of the notion that Man is inescapably progressing towards something better. But surely Mr. Cram does not have to blame Darwin for the natural conceit of people. Thousands of years before the time of Darwin, nations, tribes, and individuals were busily engaged in feeling superior to their neighbors and often to their ancestors.

No serious scientist has suggested that Man has shown any marked mental or physical advances in the last five thousand years and surely your author does not mean to state that intellectuals look upon our latest achievements in science as a proof that we are superior to our ancestors. It is evident that our discoveries are the culmination of the toil of several thousand years. Knowledge increases not because a man is brighter than his forefather but because several men in each generation make a contribution to the sum total of human knowledge.

DUDLEY BRISTOW

*Toronto,
Canada.*

SIR: Have just finished the current issue of THE MERCURY and have sat back with a pleasant after-taste. Little need to extend praise to R. A. Cram's article. Commendation appears superficial for such a work.

I don't wish to mar the complaint-free record held by Alan Devoe, but I wonder how he stacks up with Cram. Devoe strongly hints that he follows Rousseau's belief that man cometh from a "noble savage" and has been ruined by civilization's stifling mantle. Cram emphatically believes we sprang from a homely, distorted brute and that we are mentally still poking around our cavern. Cram tolls the knell of civilization as we know it and teaches the doctrine of dead-end. Devoe rakes us unmercifully for our unnatural ways throughout each of his articles and then suddenly goes soft like Will Durant and winds up on the last

paragraph with the thought that we may yet take heed in our headlong plunge to oblivion. "Hope springeth —"

HOWARD GRIFFITH

*Harrisburg,
Pennsylvania.*

SIR: If the bright idea of the article "Why We Do Not Behave Like Human Beings" was correct, Communism would surely be best for us all. But the difference between successful people and what the writer refers to as the "Neolithic Mass" is not, as he attempts to prove, one of inherent capability but of character development which is the result of choice. Almost anyone will admit that a Jukes could be as great — or at least as different from the masses — as a Washington, if he chose to make the effort.

Surprising also, after your extraordinary praise of this article, are its cock-sure tone, verbosity, and glib, outline-of-history parade of erudition. It is very disappointing to see the management of a magazine which usually provides good reading matter carried away by enthusiasm for such inferior work.

JOSEPH BROOKS

New York City.

~o~

OUR UPPER CLASS

SIR: In the Editorial in your August issue, your words, phrases and even paragraphs convey sense, but as to your meaning I have very little coherent idea. You start with the thesis "Wanted: An American Upper Class". You begin with Mr. Whitney and end up with the conclusion that the American upper class has broken with tradition and made a mess of itself. Now I want to know, what is this American upper class of which you speak so definitely? It seems to me that you have leapt into the realm of abstraction and romance, and that no such tradition ever existed amongst a more or less definitely stratified social order in America. I would think that any presumption of an upper class existing as a unit would have to be on the basis of money, as

this is the only one which accords universality of background and association between widely-separated individuals and groups. In America the conditions of wealth change so rapidly that traditions cannot be built or codes derived in a purely class-sense. So it seems to me that the term "Upper Class", if you mean what I think you do, is pure illusion, incapable of a definition from which presumptions can be made or conclusions derived.

THOMAS RUDD, JR.

*Great Barrington,
Massachusetts.*

SIR: The Editorial in the August issue should not condemn the whole class for one individual. Where would America be today if it wasn't for such creatures as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt, Andrew Carnegie, Harriman, Morgan (not T.V.A. Morgan) Henry Ford, and many others? Those with brilliant minds, shrewd, executive ability, and leadership, by the laws of nature, or the precious ability granted by God Almighty, rise to the middle or upper classes. The proletariat are proletariat because of their weak minds, self abuse, lusts, and so forth. The present proletariat are bringing forth imbeciles, and revolutionists. Do you want them to be our government?

JAMES S. BABCOCK

*Tacoma,
Washington.*

SIR: For an American upper class I nominate the teachers. Adding to them the ministers of the gospel will sort of equalize the sexes. Besides, a bit of ecstasy is needed to balance the school-marm's intellect. One teacher can chase a thousand Goebbels fans, or two (a teacher plus a preacher) put ten thousand to flight. For fools hate knowledge; they'll run from it every time — around in a circle.

EDMUND KELLY JAMES

*Oakdale,
California.*

ARE YOU FROM DIXIE?

SIR: I was entertained and amused at Sarah Linwood Slay's "Survey of the North". I got the greatest kick out of her statement that Northern men are not gentlemen. Obviously she is comparing them with Southern men. Having so frequently seen the Southern "gentlemen" in action, I have had a hearty laugh each time I think of the large number of stuffed shirts I have encountered. I would greatly appreciate having Miss Slay furnish an abstract definition of gentleman.

But with all their oddities and faults (which are probably not more than those possessed by other peoples) I enjoy and love the Southerners. I have many good friends among them, and while they hate the "Damyan" and the "nigga", after all these are only psychological scapegoats. Life to a Southerner would be rather dull without them. I think it unfortunate that so fine a people as the Southerners are mentally handicapped by excessive political and religious fanaticism. I was in the South for a time during the last Presidential election and several times had Southern businessmen say to me I should get home by election and do everything I could to defeat Roosevelt for re-election. In each case I asked if he was going to vote that way and would always be reminded that down there they were obliged to vote the Democratic ticket. It is really too bad when people deliberately disenfranchise themselves. Their hysterical state of mind over the Negro bugaboo surpasses anything of like character in history. It makes Hitler's attitude toward the Jews appear tame, and like all racial persecution, the persecuted are usually less injured than their persecutors. The fanatical attitudes and the general spirit of intolerance of other people's opinions form a terrible incubus on the neck of what should be a free people.

I am compelled, for example, to refrain from publishing my name to this letter, as the company for which I work would be

boycotted by many Southerners for what I have written—a thing which could not happen in the North, or probably in any other country outside of Germany.

A FRIEND OF THE SOUTH

Washington, D. C.

SIR: Miss Slay's Northern visit was unfortunate inasmuch as her contacts were apparently not with average people, for average people living in the North are mannerly, gracious, kindly, well-poised and entirely familiar with the art of graceful living. Miss Slay has not learned that graceful living is possible in a two-room apartment, as well as in a Southern mansion.

Isn't it unfortunate that she missed our superlative cooking, to be found so many places in New York and elsewhere in the North? Most of us never open a can for months at a time.

OLIVE GOEHRING

*Cannondale,
Connecticut.*

SIR: Whatever assaults may be made on Southern civilization, its final defence is this—the men are honorable and the women pure. I am a son of Alabama, and I am ready to defend the South with pen or life.

JOHN FREDERICK BOSWELL

*Hollywood,
California.*



IN BRIEF

Gordon Carroll's article "America Marches To War" has brought in a good deal of comment. Arthur Miller, of Neutral Bay, New South Wales, Australia, says it should be read "by every young man who doesn't want a single ticket to Europe". Harriet Connor Brown, of Lake Seneca, New York, hopes that our congressmen will appreciate its implications. R. P. Harvley, of Birmingham, Alabama, and numerous other correspondents express similar opinions. On the other hand, some of our critics

have pointed out that the use of the Industrial Mobilization Plan—by which, according to Mr. Carroll's article, America will become a Fascist State—is the only way to win the next war. This may be quite true. We have only admiration for the General Staff, U. S. A., and we are quite sure that they know better how to fight a war than we do. But all this, it seems to us, has nothing to do with the problem. The question remains: is it worth while getting in *any* war if we must become a Totalitarian State to do so? . . . Commenting on Harold Lord Varney's article "The Left Kidnaps American Youth", Jane E. Sachs, Radcliffe '40, agrees that "non-Radical Youth should indeed wake up" and adds that the fact "that it should be limp enough to allow itself to be kidnapped by a small Leftist minority seems to me a good deal more sinister than the activities of that minority". Miss Sachs adds that the American Youth slogan should be "Wake Up and Think". . . . Melvina Shannon, of Ewing, Missouri, a schoolteacher, joins the large chorus of those who think Albert Bell's article "Three-Ring Circus for Morons" is all wrong. So does M. R. of Minneapolis, and so do too many others to name. Our school system seems to be a touchy subject—which may, or may not, indicate that there is something very much the matter with it. . . . The poets were with us in force again this month and we hand the palm to George Kerr Anderson, of Franklin, Pennsylvania, for his "The Wrong Optimist" in which he directs another tirade at the poor New Dealers. It would seem that not even poets are falling for the Roosevelt hokum. . . . We were glad to hear from G. H. N., of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, for he says, "To hell with five-cent cigars—what this country needs is more free thinking magazines like THE AMERICAN MERCURY". . . . We seem to have got the college professors all riled up with our article "Professors Have Soft Jobs". Various famous pedagogues, some anonymously and others openly, have rushed in to defend

their unfortunate profession against the calumny that it is pleasant and easy. But they all seem agreed on one point—that when the author of the original article boasted that his I. Q. was not above the average he might have been telling the truth. “That is a point,” says Professor Hanford N. Burr, emeritus professor of history and philosophy at Springfield College, Springfield, Massachusetts, “which we are willing to concede”. . . . Peregrine Falcon, of Hewlett, Long Island, New York, doubts the authenticity of our anonymous article “The Jury Has Reached A Verdict” because it relates that the jurymen were paid the large sum of six dollars a day. Mr. Falcon has an eagle eye. The author of the article requested us to make this sum six dollars—instead of the actual sum—in order to help conceal his identity. . . . A dozen correspondents have greeted our article “Radio Horror” with the utmost approval, feeling it was something that should have been said long ago. Several of these letter-writers point out that there are a few good programs for children on the air. Charles P. Brady, of Philadelphia, recommends Malcolm Clair who speaks every morning except Sundays from 8:00 to 8:15 EDST over station WEAf from Chicago. And the four Williams Brothers, of Des Moines, Iowa, send us their picture and

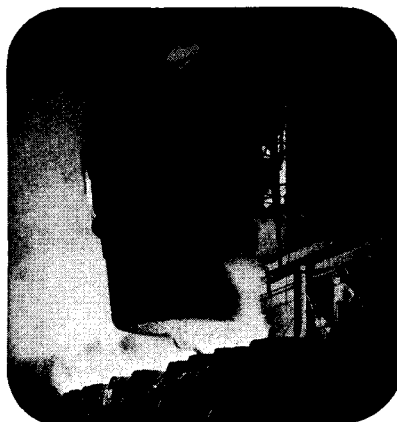
offer to provide a good children’s program for any radio station that wants to hire them. . . . Miss Jane Taylor, of Seattle, Washington, and several other correspondents want to know why we print the brief quotations from great men of the past. An accurate answer to this query involves giving away one of the secrets of the black art of editing. There is one thing every editor cannot bear to see—and that is white space on a page. He will go to any length to fill it up. Thus the editor of this magazine lay awake at night trying to figure out what to put at the bottom of pages when his articles didn’t fill. The quotations which are used at present—or “fillers” as they are known to the trade—strike us, however, as having more than utilitarian value. These comments, which are obviously applicable to present-day problems, by men who for the most part lived long ago, indicate that the mess we are currently in is nothing new under the sun. Accordingly, its causes must be fundamental. Such reflections ought to take some of the wind out of the sails of Americans who are now bragging that in Franklin Delano Roosevelt we have the worst ruler any nation ever had in history. This, of course, is not true at all; we could name a dozen worse—well, six—well, maybe we will think of the names by next month. . . .



RED POEM

BY EBENEZER ELLIOTT (1828)

What is a Communist? One who has yearnings
For equal division of unequal earnings.



The Bethlehem Steel Quiz

TRY IT ON THE FAMILY

With hats doffed to all good quiz addicts Bethlehem Steel Company presents a test for determining your knowledge of some common facts and terms concerning steel.

The person who has a good I. Q. may score favorably here, as the alternate choices given below are frequently drawn from general knowledge. Hence you may succeed by the process of elimination.

1. One of the following cities is famous for the production of steel swords:

- (a) *Hoboken* (d) *Calcutta*
- (b) *Marseilles* (e) *Toledo*
- (c) *Kansas City* (f) *South Bend*

2. The two men who, working together, were the pioneers in the de-

velopment of high-speed tool steels were:

- (a) *Zachary Taylor and Millard Fillmore*
- (b) *David Montgomery and Fred Stone*
- (c) *Frederick W. Taylor and Maunsel White*
- (d) *Richard W. Sears and A.C. Roebuck*
- (e) *Peter Cooper and Abram S. Hewitt*

3. The tin can, so-called, is made of tin plate, which is sheet steel coated with tin. Of the following edible substances there is only one which Bethlehem Steel Company does not use in manufacturing tin plate.

- (a) *bran* (b) *wheat flour* (c) *palm oil*

4. Slag wool, frequently used for insulation, is a by-product of:

- (a) *coal* (c) *blast furnace operations*
- (b) *sheep* (d) *rayon*

5. What steel company has recently completed a new mill at Sparrows Point, Maryland, for the production of cold-rolled tin plate?

Answers to "Bethlehem Quiz"

(See page IX)

1. (e) Toledo
2. (c) Frederick W. Taylor and Maunsel White. In their laboratory at Bethlehem, Pa. in 1899 they developed a new method of heat treatment which resulted in producing high speed tool steels of higher quality than had ever been known before. The first public exhibition of the Taylor & White steels was made at the Paris Exposition in 1900, and created a sensation.
3. (b) Wheat flour. Palm oil is used to decrease friction and prevent the tin from oxidizing at high temperatures. Bran absorbs this oil and polishes the tin surface.
4. (c) Blast furnace operations. When the melted pig iron is poured from the blast furnace, the molten slag which floats on top is poured into another container. On cooling it becomes a light feathery substance known as slag wool. The material may also be processed through compression into insulating boards and similar materials.
5. Bethlehem Steel Company.

MORE MUSIC FOR YOUR MONEY

Enjoy two or three symphonies at the price of one, by ordering from our bargain catalog of the world's best recorded music. Magnificent performances. Brand new recordings, guaranteed perfect. *Catalog free*

The Gramophone Shop

18 EAST 48th ST., NEW YORK

Wickersham 2-1876

We ship records safely around the corner or around the world

Look for a new MERCURY BOOK on the 5th of each month — 25c each

NOW ON SALE

I COVER THE WATERFRONT

by MAX MILLER



*** indicate an outstanding performance, ** a competent performance, * an acceptable performance. ††† denote exceptional recording, †† efficient recording, † poor recording.

VOCAL

***†† *Che Gelida Manina*, Puccini, and *Salve, dimora*, Gounod: (RCA-Victor, one 12-inch record, \$2). Two samples of the current talents of that wandering troubador, Beniamino Gigli, both magnificently sung in the approved operatic manner. Note that the *Faust* excerpt is in Italian. There are excellent orchestral accompaniments directed by Eugene Goossens.

***†† *Il mio tesoro*, Mozart, and *Quanto e bella*, Donizetti: (Columbia, one ten-inch record, \$1.50). The voice and style of Luigi Fort make his performance of the famous aria from Mozart's *Don Giovanni* the finest since John McCormack's of a generation ago. The orchestral accompaniment is only tolerable.

INSTRUMENTAL

***†† *Quartet in A major* (opus 41, No. 3), Schumann: (Columbia, four 12-inch records, \$6). One of the most beautiful quartets in the literature, much too-infrequently heard. The Leners do a sound performance of it, though one could conceive of more musical refinement than is present. The tone and balance of the recording are exceptionally good, except in the adagio where Lener's violin predominates undesirably.

ORCHESTRAL

***†† *Symphonies No. 3 and 5*, Sibelius: (RCA-Victor, seven 12-inch records, \$14). These performances by Robert Kajanus and the London Symphony Orchestra hardly represent the newest thing in recording, since they were both made several years

RECORDED MUSIC

ago, but they are a reasonable representation of the music in the scores. The Fifth Symphony requires no introduction, but the rarely played Third is an attractive and spirited work which deserves to be better known than it is.

DANCE

The New Black and Tan Fantasy and Stepping into Swing Society (Brunswick, one 10-inch record, \$.75). A new and amplified version of Duke Ellington's celebrated lament, superbly played by the Duke and his orchestra. Accompanying it is a clever trifle of recent origin, interesting for its smart performance.

Lover Come Back and From the Land of the Sky-Blue Water: (Vocalion, one 10-inch record, \$.35). Mildred Bailey and a group of certified swingers operate profitably on two old favorites. The face-lifting is especially becoming to Cadman's *Sky-Blue Water*. Included in the accompanying orchestra are such virtuosi as Teddy Wilson, Dave Tough, and Choo Berry.

Powerhouse and Toy Trumpet (Master, ten-inch, \$.75). Two impressions in jazz by Raymond Scott, performed by the quintet bearing his name. The first of them is especially diverting, and unusually well-wrought for a piece of this character, even more so than the ubiquitous *Twilight in Turkey* by the same gentlemen.

Love is Here to Stay and I Was Doing All Right (Brunswick, one 10-inch record, \$.75). Two of the last tunes written by George Gershwin, and eminently in his best manner. Red Norvo and his newly organized orchestra make much of the material, with particularly tasteful singing by Mildred Bailey.

Georgia on My Mind and Rockin' Chair (Bluebird, one 10-inch record, \$.35). A re-issue of Mildred Bailey's inimitable version of two venerable favorites. Neither the accompanying orchestra nor the recording is all that it might be, but La Bailey is unsurpassed as a virtuosa of the insidiously raucous.

YOURS FOR KEEPS

on Victor Records

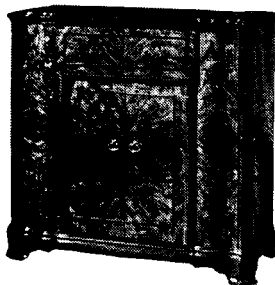
MOUSSORGSKY'S

"Pictures at an Exhibition"

A brilliant new recording
by the Philadelphia Orchestra,
EUGENE ORMANDY, Conductor

Musical Masterpiece of the Month . . . Album M-442
(AM-442 for automatic operation) 8 sides, \$8.00.

Exciting music . . . composed by one of music's most imaginative minds, the Russian, Moussorgsky . . . arranged for orchestra by Lucien Cailliet. The Philadelphia Orchestra under Conductor Ormandy is at its colorful, powerful best in this new Victor Higher Fidelity recording.



RCA VICTROLA U-134-A, record and radio entertainment in a distinguished 18th Century Cabinet. Has new, Gentle Action Automatic Record Changer . . . High Fidelity . . . Magic Voice . . . Crystal Pick-up . . . 16 tubes . . . Electric Tuning for 8 stations . . . \$355.00* (in mahogany, \$365.00*), including \$9.00 worth of choice of Victor Records, membership in Victor Record Society, RCA Victor Master Antenna. Similar offer applies on most other RCA Victrolas.

Listen to the "Magic Key of RCA" every Sunday, 2 to 3 P.M., E.S.T. You can buy RCA Victrolas on C.I.T. easy payment plan. Any radio instrument is better with an RCA Victor Master Antenna. *Price f.o.b. Camden, N. J., subject to change without notice.

RCA Victrola

COMBINES RECORD AND RADIO ENTERTAINMENT
A SERVICE OF THE RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA

PRODUCED 2005 BY THE
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Carrying on "T.R.'s" tradition

ONCE you step inside the Roosevelt, the tumult and the shouting die. Around you is dignity, quiet. At your command is Service—perfect and unobtrusive.

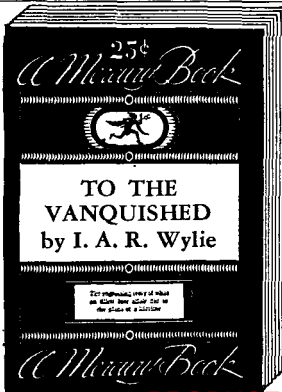
You may live simply or entertain at the Roosevelt in an atmosphere as traditionally hospitable as that of the great "T.R."

- ★
 Roosevelt Grill, dining and dancing every evening except Sunday.
-  Dine 'neath the Hendrik Hudson Room's noted Wyeth murals.
-  Cocktail in any of half-a-dozen gay, intimate spots.
-  Red Cap service underground directly from Grand Central.

THE ROOSEVELT

Bernam G. Hines, Managing Director
Madison Ave. at 45th St., New York

Ready — October 5th



Any Newstand — 25¢

THE CONTRIBUTORS

LAURENCE BELL (*The Most Awful Ride in the World*) is a free-lance writer and frequent contributor to *THE MERCURY*.

RALPH ADAMS CRAM (*The Mass-Man Takes Over*) is the well-known architect and author. **LAWRENCE DENNIS** (*What Price Good Neighbor?*), economist,

writer, and lecturer, lives in New York City.

GLENN WARD DRESBACH (*The Boast*) is a resident of Illinois and a contributor of verse to many magazines.

SIDNEY A. FOX (*Do You Wear Eyeglasses?*) is a practicing physician and instructor in Ophthalmology at New York University.

J. P. McEVOY (*I've Got That Million-Dollar Smile*) is the well-known humorist and author.

LEW MORRIS (*Don't Send Your Boy to Prep School*) is a student at Yale.

JOHN ROBERT QUINN (*Autumn Recessional*) is with the Post Office Department in Washington and has contributed to various periodicals.

NATHAN SCHACHNER (*The Truth About Aaron Burr*) is the author of *The Medieval Universities* (Stokes) and is now writing a biography of Alexander Hamilton.

RICHARD W. SCOTT (*Anschluss With Canada*), for ten years a newspaperman, lives in Ottawa.

LOUIS STODDARD (*Wind Going By*) is twenty-five and has been having verse published for the past year.

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD (*Government-Owned Railroads*) is a contributing editor of *The Nation* and the author of many books and articles.





The LITERARY BAZAAR

FIRST EDITIONS :: RARE BOOKS
AUTOGRAPHS :: LITERARY SERVICES

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

MATHILDE WEIL: LITERARY AGENT

Books, stories, articles and verse criticized and marketed. Play, scenario and radio departments. Ghostwriting, editing, typing. THE WRITER'S WORKSHOP, INC., General Electric Building, 570 Lexington Ave., New York.

LAURENCE ROBERTS, LITERARY AGENT

Stories, Novels, Books Sold. Editorially recognized aid in placement of fiction and non-fiction. Personal assistance in revision, criticism, editing for publication. Information on request. New Authors invited.

49 West 42d Street, New York City.

WANTED Authors' Manuscripts for immediate marketing. Prompt examination. Send manuscripts to RÉVEL SYNDICATE, 73 W. 44 St., New York City.

GENERAL

Can you write an intelligent letter? Hundreds of CONTACTS members are anxious to discuss human problems with other members. CONTACTS, established 1927, for the mentally marooned, is now again operated under the popular old system. Send 3c stamp for details. CONTACTS, Box 91, Station D, New York City.

ATHEIST BOOKS. 32-page catalogue free. Truth Seeker Co., 38 Park Row, New York, N. Y.

WANTED—Original poems, songs, for immediate consideration. Send poems to COLUMBIAN MUSIC PUBLISHERS LTD., Dept. H78, Toronto, Can.

GHOST, Literary, for person with power to syndicate daily. Comedian preferred. Prose/try. Will divide returns. Dernier Stone, 1112 N. Main St., Brookfield, Missouri.

Book Manuscripts Wanted—All subjects for immediate publication. Booklet sent free.

MEADOR PUBLISHING CO.
324 Newbury Street Boston, Massachusetts

OUT-OF-PRINT

WE SPECIALIZE and are successful in finding promptly the "Out-of-Print" or "Hard-to-Find" books which you particularly desire. Please write us stating "Wants." No obligation. THE SEVEN BOOK-HUNTERS, Station O, Box 22, N. Y. C.

THE LITERARY BAZAAR places before you its large and wealthy collectors' market. Announce your first editions, your rarities, your literary services, your stamps, prints and coins in this section. A half-inch advertisement (about 40 words) now costs only \$5.00—and on a twelve time order only \$4.00. Write Dept. LB 10, THE AMERICAN MERCURY, 570 Lexington Avenue, New York.



SAVE

16% to 25%

on your magazines

Special arrangements with a few of the better publishers enable us to offer you substantial savings on the following combination subscriptions.

THE AMERICAN MERCURY and READER'S DIGEST \$5.00
(regularly \$6.00—you save \$1)

THE AMERICAN MERCURY and SCRIBNER'S \$4.50
(regularly \$5.50—you save \$1)

THE AMERICAN MERCURY and ATLANTIC MONTHLY \$6.00
(regularly \$8.00—you save \$2)

THE AMERICAN MERCURY and PARENTS' MAGAZINE \$4.00
(regularly \$5.00—you save \$1.00)

THIS OFFER will be available for a limited time only. Mail your order today and save money.

I enclose \$_____. Send me THE AMERICAN MERCURY and _____ for one year each.

Name.....

Address.....

City and State.....

A.M.10-38

THE AMERICAN MERCURY
570 Lexington Avenue, New York



THE NEW HAVEN

Streamline

PARADE

Locomotives that combine power, speed, smoothness, streamlined efficiency, brilliant performance, safety!

Coaches that are the last word in air-conditioned comfort and streamlined grace, combining luxury with economy.

Grill Cars offering the finest of foods and refreshments in smartly modern surroundings, at self-service prices.

THE NEW HAVEN R. R.

LOOK LEADS **ALL OTHER MAGAZINES** **IN NEWSSTAND SALES**

"Have you read LOOK'S picture stories on "War Propaganda Exposed", "Employer-Employee Relationships", "If Fascism Comes To America?", "America's Housing Problem" and other timely subjects? Here is a vivid, new pictorial journalism that gives you a better comprehension of social problems. LOOK averaged 1,555,000 buyers per issue, for the first 6 months of 1938, leading all magazines in newsstand sales. LOOK is your kind of a magazine—buy the new LOOK, now on all newsstands."

**I WOULDN'T MISS AN
ISSUE OF LOOK--IT'S A
GREAT NEW EDITORIAL
FORCE IN AMERICA**

Look



4

100

Each of the Mercury BOOKS thus far published has won an appreciative and increasingly larger audience. They are well printed and sturdily bound. Mail the coupon below NOW — for the biggest dollar's worth of thrilling reading you ever enjoyed — any four books for \$1.

2 — **EVERYTHING IS THUNDER**, by J. L. Hardy. "The most absorbing book I've read in five years." — *O. O. McIntyre*

3 — **13 STEPS**, by Whitman Chambers. A powerful, startling novel paced by breathless action and a strange love story.

4 — **COMPANY K**, by William March. "An extraordinarily moving and an important book. . . ." — *Sat. Rev. of Literature*

5 — **THIEVES LIKE US**, by Edward Anderson. "The most exciting new figure to appear in American writing since Hemingway and Faulkner." — *Sat. Rev. of Literature*

6 — **WEEPING IS FOR WOMEN**, by Donald Barr Chidsey. The engrossing story of what an illicit love affair did to the plans of a lifetime.

7 — **DIAMOND JIM BRADY**, by Parker

Morell. The robust, scandalous life of America's greatest playboy.

8 — **HOT SATURDAY**, by Harvey Fergusson. A realistic statement of a youthful sex crisis.

9 — **CRISS-CROSS**, by Don Tracy. A hard-hitting, rapid-fire novel of love and adventure in the realistic manner.

10 — **THE GENERAL**, by C. S. Forester. A vitriolic novel of romantic bravery, frankly exposing the inside story of war.

11 — **MANTRAP**, by Sinclair Lewis. An exciting story of romance and adventure, by America's foremost living novelist.

12 — **I COVER THE WATERFRONT**, by Max Miller. "Get the book and read it . . . for humor, good sense, wisdom and entertainment." — *Burton Rascoe*

Single copies of any of these books are available at 25c each — Order by number

Enclosed find \$..... Send books, each four copies in a colored box to:

Name.....

Fill in Book Nos.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Address.....

Fill in Book Nos.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

City..... State.....

AM 10-38